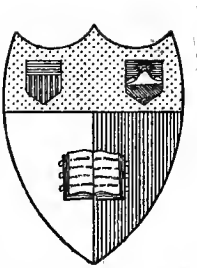
The Story of the Fuh-Kien Mission

ASIA





Cornell University Library

Ithaca, New York

CHARLES WILLIAM WASON
COLLECTION
CHINA AND THE CHINESE

THE GIFT OF
CHARLES WILLIAM WASON
CLASS OF 1876
1918

Cornell University Library
BV 3420.F8S86
The story of the Fuh-kien mission of the
3 1924 023 068 582
was

Wasom
BV3420
F8S86



The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924023068582

FUH-KIEN



Standards Geog.l Estab.t 55 Charing Cross.

THE STORY

OF

THE FUH-KIEN MISSION

OF THE

Church Missionary Society.

By EUGENE STOCK.

WITH A MAP AND THIRTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

Lands of the East, awake,
Soon shall your sons be free;
The sleep of ages break,
And rise to liberty.
On your far hills, long cold and gray,
Has dawned the everlasting day.

"This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

London:

SEELEY, JACKSON, & HALLIDAY, 54, Fleet Street.

CHURCH MISSIONARY HOUSE, Salisbury Square.

1877.

Wason
BV3420
F8586

W4478

LONDON:
Printed by Jas. Truscott & Son,
Suffolk Lane, City.

THIS book is a compilation from the journals and letters of the Missionaries of the Church Missionary Society. Many of the extracts have already been printed in the Society's periodicals, but some now appear for the first time, among which may be particularly mentioned those from Bishop ALFORD'S narrative of his second visitation tour in 1871, and the Rev. J. E. MAHOOD'S account of his perilous journey to Ku-Cheng in the same year.

I am indebted to the Bishop, and to the Rev. A. W. CRIBB, for important information.

Most of the wood-cuts have appeared in the C.M.S. periodicals, but some are new. The smaller ones are from very rough pen-and-ink sketches taken on the spot by the Rev. A. B. Hutchinson, of Hong-Kong, during his tour through the district in 1874.

May God add His blessing!

E. S.

January 1st, 1877.

CONTENTS.

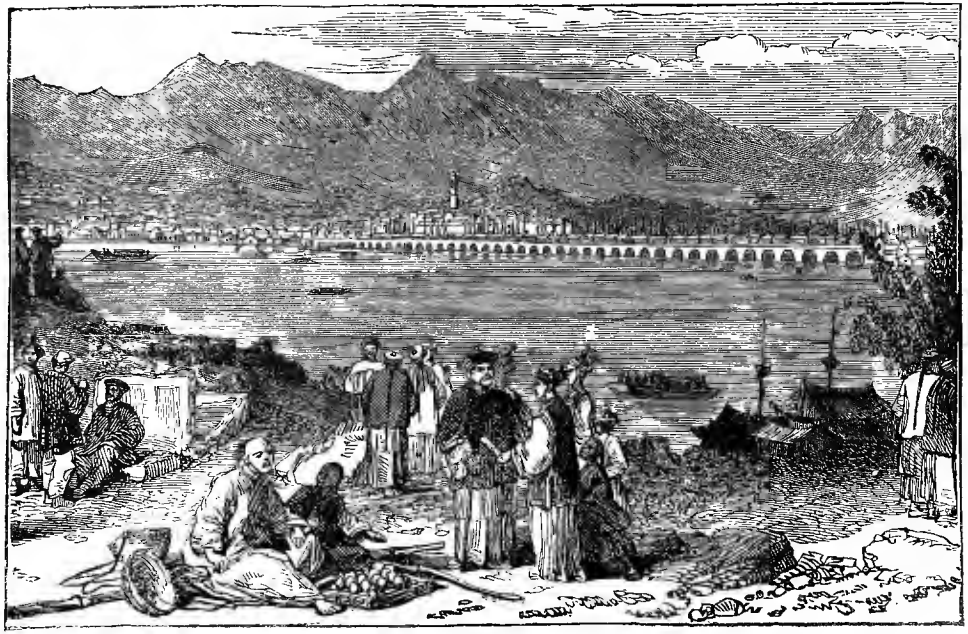
CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The City of Fuh-Chow	3
II.	Fuh-Chow.—Sowing the Seed	15
III.	Fuh-Chow.—The First-Fruits of the Harvest	30
IV.	Fuh-Chow.—Building up the Church	43
V.	Fuh-Chow.—The Last Four Years	58
VI.	The Province of Fuh-Kien	70
VII.	Lieng-Kong and Tang-Iong	89
VIII.	Lo-Nguong.—I. The Church Founded	105
IX.	Lo-Nguong.—II. The Church Tested	117
X.	Lo-Nguong.—III. The Church Growing	128
XI.	Villages in the Lo-Nguong District	140
XII.	A-chia	157
XIII.	Ning-Taik	172
XIV.	Sioh-Chuo and the Western Villages	182
XV.	Ku-Cheng	194
XVI.	Ang-Iong and other Villages round Ku-Cheng	213
XVII.	Sang-Iong—Sek-Paik-Tu—Ping-Nang—Chui-Kau	226
XVIII.	The Remoter Great Cities: Iong-Ping-Fu—Kiong-Ning-Fu—Hok-Ning-Fu	243
XIX.	The River Stations: Ming-Ang-Teng, &c.	254
XX.	Conclusion	263

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
The City of Fuh-Chow	2
Fuh-Chow and the River Min	5
Street in a Chinese City	8
The City of Fuh-Chow from Black-Stone Hill	12
Chinese Children	37
A Chinese Painter	50
The Rev. Wong Kiu-taik, and his Wife Lydia	52
Bohea Hills, Black Tea District, Fuh-Kien	72
Scenery on the River Min, Fuh-Kien	76
Preaching to Chinese	79
Buddhist Temple	81
River Scene in China	91
Tea and Paddy Fields, Fuh-Kien	94
Rest House, between Lieng-Kong and Tang-Iong	98
Philosopher's Mountain, at the Head of the Lo-Nguong Valley	106
On the Road from A-chia to Lo-Nguong	108
Lo-Nguong Church	124
Valley and City of Lo-Nguong	129
Catechist's House at Lo-Nguong	132
Sing, of Lo-Nguong, aged 77	135
Missionary's Upper Room at Lo-Nguong	137
Siu-Hung Church	144
On the Road to A-chia	160
A-chia Church and Catechist's House	168

PAGE

Bridge near Ning-Taik 177
View of Sioh-Chuo 186
View from a Window in Sioh-Chuo 187
Ku-Cheng 196
Ku-Cheng Church 209
Chinese Catechist Showing Books 220
Chinese Sedan Chair 229
A Public Apology at Sang-Iong 234
Ming-ang-teng 256
Temple in the Min River 260



FUH-CHOW.

THE

STORY OF THE FUH-KIEN MISSION.

CHAPTER I.

THE CITY OF FUH-CHOW.

Say unto Tyrus, O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, which art a merchant of the people for many isles, Thus saith the Lord God; O Tyrus, thou hast said, I am of perfect beauty. . . . Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers upon thee, . . . and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom. —*Ezek.* xxvii. 3, xxviii. 7.

The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.—*Eph.* vi. 17.

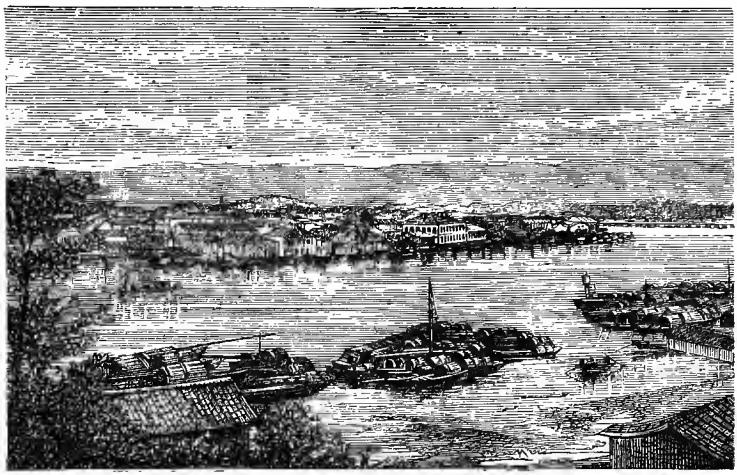
I cling to yon crowded city,
Though I shrink from its woe and sin.
Bonar.

IF we sail up the south-eastern coast of China, from Hong-Kong, we come about four hundred miles further to the mouth of a large river called the Min, which, with its tributaries, waters nearly the whole of the great province of Fuh-Kien, comprising a territory as large as Ireland, and three times as populous. Let us in imagination ascend this noble stream.

As we approach the mouth, steering cautiously through a

somewhat intricate channel between picturesque little islands, lofty granitic mountains rise before us, and between their almost perpendicular precipices we enter the narrow channel of the Min. Further on, where the gorge widens a little, Chinese villages nestle at the foot of the cliffs, or crown the lower spurs of the mountains, each with its watch-tower rising conspicuous above the low houses; and here and there a hill-torrent leaps from the precipice into the valley below. Signs of Chinese industry meet the eye on all sides, every terrace or ledge of rock being assiduously cultivated. After threading another narrow passage, with columns of rocks on either side piled up to a height of a thousand feet, we emerge into a fertile valley eight or ten miles broad, in the midst of which, ten miles further up the river, stands Fuh-Chow, the capital of the province. As we approach the city, the loftiest peak in the surrounding mountain chains rises on our right. It is called Kushan, or the Drum mountain, and its summit, which is 3,900 feet high, is occasionally, in the depth of winter, white with snow for a few hours. In a hollow at the foot of the peak, and about 2,000 feet above the plain, is a famous Buddhist monastery, a favourite retreat for the foreign residents in Fuh-Chow in the hot season; and within its hospitable walls our missionaries have frequently been thankful to take refuge from the almost intolerable atmosphere of the city.

The thickening forest of masts, both of Chinese and of smaller foreign vessels, and the numerous boat-building yards lining the river bank, warn us that we are nearing the capital; and presently a rough but massive bridge, built of enormous blocks of granite, and no less than a third of a mile in length, stretches across the stream. This is the Wan-show-Keaou, or bridge of ten thousand ages. On our left, as we approach it, is the populous suburb of Nantai, where, on a rising ground, stand the houses of the European merchants. The city lies



FUH-CHOW AND THE RIVER MIN.

away to the right, approached from the bridge by a narrow winding street nearly three miles long. Let us land at the bridge and traverse this pattern of a Chinese street, with our eyes wide open while our guide explains to us the many curious sights that are to be seen.

What a busy and confused scene! How quickly the thronging crowds move to and fro! Yet there are few accidents, and little or no wrangling. We have been told that the people of Fuh-Kien are more turbulent and independent than most Chinamen; and we were prepared, on the other hand, for a certain amount of order from a people so tenacious of forms and ceremonies; but here we find apparent disorder and yet no disturbance—a crowd of avaricious tradesmen pushing their business with the utmost consideration for those around them. The road is very badly paved, and we are thankful that we have to step into the deep holes and over the dirty heaps in

the dry season. In wet weather we should prefer to occupy the sedan chairs in which wealthy citizens are borne on the shoulders of their servants.

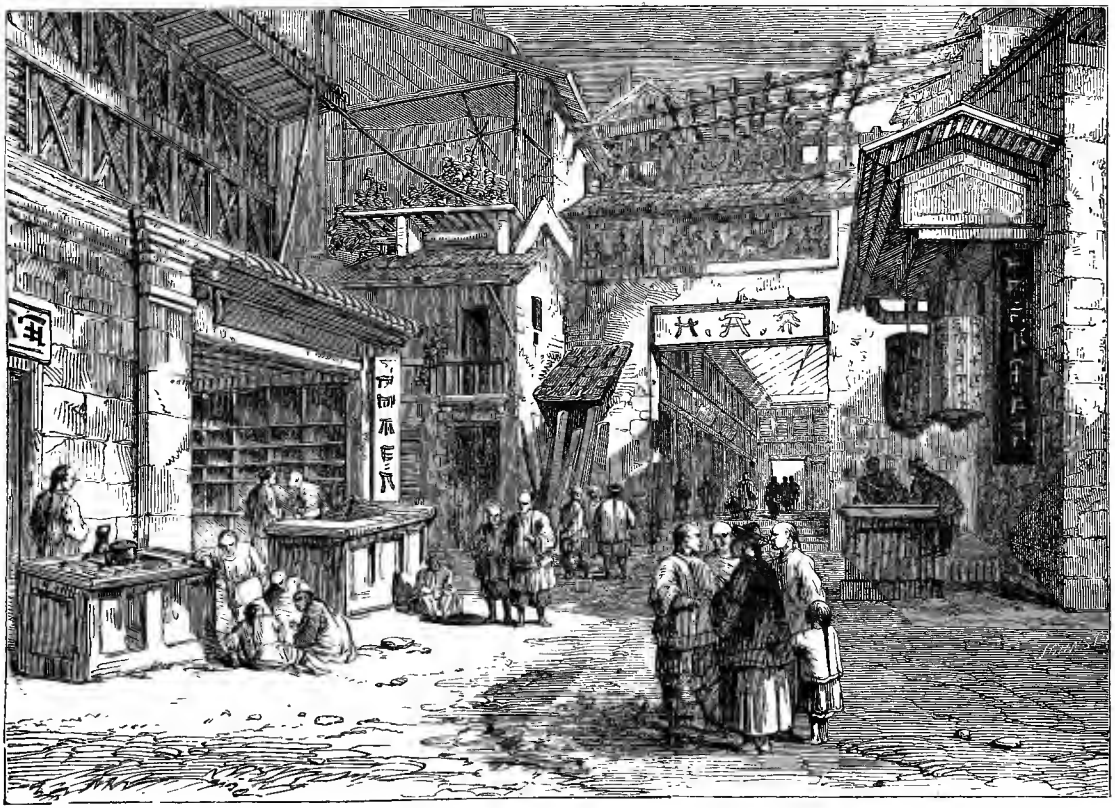
Let us enter one of the houses. At first sight they seem to be built with their backs to the front, but we find that we are really looking at the front, and that the door is the only opening to the low one-story shed in which these wonderful people crowd, more like hens in a fowl-house than like human beings. The doors, which are sometimes oval or leaf-shaped, are placed so as not to be opposite to each other, in order to inconvenience the evil spirits which this clever people dread so much. The shop front is open, with a double counter, so that the proprietor may serve in the street as well as in his shop. The foundations are of stone, the framework of wood, and the walls of matting and thatch; the roof alone shows by its shape the tented origin of the building. Each tradesman erects a tablet to one of the gods that preside over mercantile transactions, before which he burns incense sticks twice a day. As we return to the street we inquire the name of the tradesman who has so politely shown us his premises, and our guide explains that although he has a sign of some seven feet in height, yet it does not contain his name, but a motto, "Mutual Advantage." Next door we see an enterprising firm trading under the title, "Rising Goodness," and so on all up the street.

As we approach the city gates the street becomes more and more thronged, until it seems as if some calamity within the walls had compelled the whole population to migrate into the suburbs, and to do their business in the open air, for here we see not only travelling fruiterers, pastrymen, cooks, and vendors of gimcracks, but blacksmiths, tinkers, and shoemakers too. We are not surprised to see a bookseller's stall, but we are not prepared for a migratory banker or a chemist

and druggist, who, one would suppose, must necessarily settle in a fixed place, that we may know where to find them. We are considerably amused by the sight of a placid Chinaman having his head shaved (or rather scraped) in a quiet nook of this fancy fair. We are not surprised to learn that a wise and paternal government compels them to submit to this trying operation, and that those who rebel against the Tartars, who have ruled for more than two centuries, let their hair grow. It is very easily seen that nothing but duty would cause them to put up with such a continual affliction. As the victim is released we see him resume his work at the forge close by, and we learn that the operator has performed gratis in return for the use of the blacksmith's charcoal fire to warm his water. We miss the rows of gas lamps to which we have been accustomed, but if only we could be here at the time of the "Feast of Lanterns," we should find much more to admire in the effect produced by the lighting up of a vast number of paper lanterns, of all sizes and shapes and covered with all sorts of devices.

And now we meet with several tradesmen whose business we cannot comprehend—chiromancers, fortune-tellers, and *choosers of lucky days.* The dentist hangs round his neck a ghastly string of grinders and fangs as evidences of his skill; but what testimonials shall we require before we do business with the gentleman "who chooses lucky days"? And yet he does a good business, for no Chinaman can be married, or buried, or take any important step, except on a lucky day. The Chinaman, with all his shrewdness and ability, is as much a slave to his superstitions as the most degraded negro.

But what is this procession of gaily dressed folk coming down the street with gongs beating and fireworks cracking? The white dresses notwithstanding, there is a sad look about



STREET IN A CHINESE CITY.

the people forming the procession. It is a funeral party. This is their lucky day for carrying the dead parent to his last home. All the rites have been performed, and the widow and children are sadly wending their way to a small knoll in the country, there to lay their loved one down in the hope that if they continue to pay the required subscription, the departed one will wander about in the world of spirits, clothed and fed and supplied with ready money. That is all.

The Buddhist priest tells them nothing of a Day of Judgment, nothing of a Heaven; without hope himself, he gives them none. These busy thronging multitudes literally have no religion that will influence their lives in the present, or give them hope for the future. They have no God; they are given up to selfishness; they carry on their trade without any day of rest; they are told that their profits will be larger if they burn incense before certain idols, and that their luck will be better if once a year they observe certain ceremonies which bear a semblance to idolatrous worship, and so they do as they are advised. Their God is Self, and the only objects of worship they at all care about are their ancestors.

They may call themselves Buddhists, and have a vague conception of attaining that mysterious state called Nirvana, which is practically annihilation; or they may profess Taouism, and pay some homage to its multitude of divinities; or, if they belong to the literary classes, they will hold both Buddhists and Taouists in contempt, and hold proudly to the moral maxims of Confucius; but whichever of the three national religions may claim them as adherents, their real faith, such as it is, is in the ancestral worship which prevailed in China long before Confucius taught the five cardinal virtues, or Taouist austerities and magical ceremonies were thought of, or Buddhism covered the land with temples and pagodas, convents

and monasteries, priests and nuns. Go into any house we may choose, everywhere we shall find the ancestral tablets—pieces of board twelve inches long and three broad, each with the name, rank, and date of birth and death of the person it commemorates. Is it a rich man's house? There is a hall set apart for the tablets. Is it the hovel of the poor? They adorn a special shelf in the single room. Daily, before these ancestral tablets, are prayers and incense offered. It is the worship of the dead.

Before we reach the gate of the city we are to witness another procession peculiar to China. A number of porters carrying various articles of dress and household furniture are parading the street, ostentatiously displaying a bride's contribution to the furniture of her future home. We do not see the bride herself in her gay marriage chair on her way from her old home to her new one, but we know that she is entirely giving up her own family and joining that of her husband. She will live with the parents of the bridegroom, who again may be living with *their* parents, for it is a common thing to find three generations living together in tolerable peace and harmony.

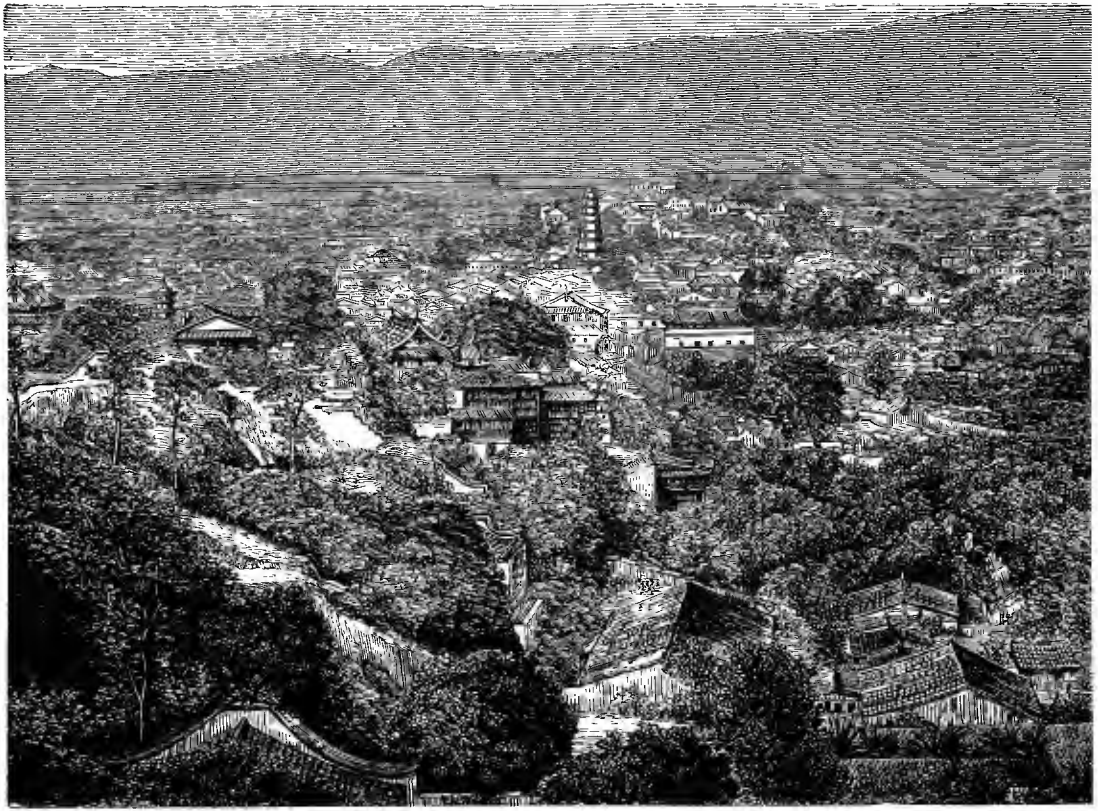
As we enter the southern gate we notice a curious sight—a basket carrier collecting something which he evidently values very highly, and which we are surprised to learn is only scraps of waste paper with the Chinese character written on them. They have been taught by Confucius to venerate the written character, and therefore they collect the paper in this way to be afterwards carefully burned.

We partake of a slight refreshment at one of the curious bamboo stalls, which does duty as a cookshop, and provides warm and tasty rice puddings and hot tea at all hours of the day, and then, passing on through the city, we catch sight of a European face in a room used as a temporary chapel by the side of this

teeming highway. And now for the first time do we thoroughly appreciate the difficulties of a missionary to the Chinese. There stands the missionary, in a conspicuous garb, speaking with difficulty, in a language he has been learning for several years, to a people who are worldly above all others, thoroughly conceited, believing in their own wisdom and filled with contempt for the poor "foreign devil," as he is frequently called; taught from their earliest childhood to venerate all that he condemns, and to despise all that he teaches to be good and right, while the slightest disposition to heed the things that be of God is the signal for persecution from every relative and friend he has. How can we expect him to hear and embrace the saving truths of the Gospel? Yet in spite of all this, we see here, supporting the words of the foreigner, a Native catechist and a Native pastor, whose sincerity none can doubt, to whose honesty the suspicious and distrustful Chinese are themselves ready to bear witness. The sight lends vigour to our steps, and we continue our journey to the Mission premises with a lighter heart and with renewed hope.

Presently we arrive at the highest bit of ground in the city, called the Wu-shih-shan, or Black-Stone Hill, and on this, amid pleasure-grounds and temples, we observe the British Consulate. On the same hill, but some ten minutes' walk further, we find the Church Mission-house. From the summit we survey the whole town; and the surrounding plain, to the foot of the mountains, and extending north and south twenty miles, is spread before us like a map.

It is a fine sight. The city indeed is not very picturesque. It appears "like a solid mass of murky roofs," the streets being too narrow for us to distinguish them from the elevation on which we stand. Trees, however, here and there rise above the houses, and lofty ornamented poles or walls of a bright red colour mark the temples and the Mandarin dwellings.



THE CITY OF FUH-CHOW FROM BLACK-STONE HILL.

But beyond the walls, which are seven miles in circumference, the broad plain, encircled by the mountains, intersected by canals, studded with rural villages, temples, and fish-ponds, and richly cultivated, affords a beautiful prospect. Facing the north-west, where the Min emerges from the mountain range, we are looking in the direction whence come the two great staples of Fuh-Chow commerce, timber and tea. The famous black tea district of Bohea (so called from a mountainous chain of that name) lies beyond those hills; and wood of many and varied kinds—camphor-wood especially—abounds up the course of the river. Mr. Wolfe thus refers to this view, and the thoughts suggested by it, in a letter written in 1863, soon after his arrival at Fuh-Chow :—

Hill rising behind hill, in beautiful order, form the extensive plain into a natural and most magnificent amphitheatre. Looking down upon the city, with its 600,000 inhabitants inside the walls, fills the mind of the spectator with thoughts and feelings which can be realised only by himself. The whole city is seen from our door,* so that we can never go out or come in without being reminded of the vastness of our work, and our own want of strength to accomplish it. The entire beautiful valley of the Min lies spread before our eyes; the river itself, flowing noiselessly along,

* In the engraving, the hill in the left foreground is Black-Stone Hill. About the left centre of the picture, on this hill, will be observed a white wall; behind it a house with a slightly gabled roof looking as if it were on the highest point of the hill; and behind that, the top of a small pagoda. This wall surrounds the C.M.S. Mission compound; and the house is the old mission-house, now burnt down, but replaced by a new one built by the late Rev. J. E. Mahood. To the right, but lower down, and almost exactly in the centre of the picture, is another English-looking house, which is now used as a girls' school, and as the residence of the Native Pastor, the Rev. Wong Kiu-taik. Between the two houses, and a little behind, is the temple of the "Pearly Emperor Supreme Ruler," the great idol whose title (Shangti) is the term used by most of our missionaries to express "God." Another hill, crowded with buildings, will be seen in the background, with a famous pagoda half-way up it. Just beneath this pagoda, between the two hills, a building stands up from the mass of houses: this is the city gate, the lower ground to the right being the suburbs.

having its surface enlivened with crowds of boats—the various plots of ground formed by canals which pass through the vale—the crops of rice and wheat waving in the sun—the clumps of trees and hamlets scattered irregularly over the plain, with a grave or a mausoleum occasionally attracting the attention, and reminding one that death is the same everywhere.

If the sight of a single city overwhelms the missionary with the vastness of his work, as well it may, what must be his feelings as he thinks of the great province of which it is the capital, with its fifteen millions of souls—not to speak of all China, with its four hundred millions—spread out beyond! Fuh-Chow means "the happy city," and Fuh-Kien "happily established"; and certainly, with their diversified scenery, their rich produce, and their industrious people, the city and the province only need the Gospel—the *Fuh-yin* or "happy message"—with its blessed provision of grace and pardon, life and peace, to make them indeed abodes of true happiness. How the *Fuh-yin* was carried to Fuh-Chow, and from city to city over the mountains and valleys of Fuh-Kien, we shall tell in subsequent chapters.

Were ye not fain to doubt how Faith could dwell
Amid that dreary glare, in this world's citadel?
But . . .
. . . Be ye sure that Love can bless
E'en in this crowded loneliness,
Where ever-moving myriads seem to say,
Go—thou art nought to us, nor we to thee—away!

Keble.

Come, O Thou all-victorious Lord,
Thy power to us make known;
Strike with the hammer of Thy word,
And break these hearts of stone!

C. Wesley.

CHAPTER II.

FUH-CHOW—SOWING THE SEED.

His spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue . . . and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then certain philosophers . . . encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.—*Acts* xvii. 16—18.

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.—*Eccl.* xi. 6.

Sowing the seed by the daylight fair,
Sowing the seed by the noon-tide glare;
Sowing the seed by the fading light,
Sowing the seed in the solemn night:
O what shall the harvest be?
What shall the harvest be?

IN May, 1850, the Revs. W. Welton and R. D. Jackson arrived at Fuh-Chow as missionaries of the Church Missionary Society. The American missionaries, who had preceded them by four years, were not allowed to live inside the walls, but only at the suburb of Nantai. Through the intervention of the British Consul, however, part of a temple, on the Black-Stone Hill within the city walls, was assigned to the new-comers as a residence. This concession, which was obtained with difficulty, would probably have been soon lost, but for the personal popularity

quickly acquired by Mr. Welton, who having been a medical man of some experience, opened a dispensary, to which Chinese of all classes thronged. The *literati*, who had several colleges and schools on the hill, took umbrage at the proximity of the missionaries, and having failed to prevent their occupation of the temple, resolved to turn them out. A series of petty annoyances began: the tiles of the roof were forcibly removed one night, and the garden door carried away; efforts were made to rouse the passions of the populace; and at last the priest of the temple, who was the lessee, brought to the Consul the quarter's rent which had been paid in advance, and begged him to get rid of the obnoxious tenants. Nothing came of this, and though the excitement continued, some successful cures performed by Mr. Welton won the hearts of the people. But ultimately, to save the local officials who had ratified the agreement from the displeasure of the supreme authorities at Peking, to whom the *literati* appealed, the missionaries consented to remove to another temple, equally well situated, but not objected to by the literary class.

This difficulty, however, was but the first of many similar ones in the history of the Fuh-Kien Mission.

The ninth day of the ninth moon is a great festival, the principal amusement of which is the flying of kites, made in the shape of birds and insects, on that very Black-Stone Hill on which the temple was situated. During this festival, in the following year, 1851 (when it fell on November 1st), the crowd of holiday-makers attacked the premises, destroyed the furniture, and carried off all they could lay hands upon. Mr. Welton took refuge in the interior of the temple, and was kindly protected by the priest. A few months later, when he hired a Chinese house with a view of fitting it up as a school, the workmen employed in repairing and adapting it were so violently threatened by the *literati* that they had to desist;

two literary men engaged to organise the school were seized by the authorities (acting, it was believed, under instructions from Peking, where reactionary counsels then prevailed), flogged, and cast into prison; and Mr. Welton was obliged to abandon his plan.

The spirit of the missionaries, like that of St. Paul at Athens, was from the first deeply stirred by the sight of a whole city "given to idolatry," "full of idols." Heathen processions and superstitious observances met their eyes on every side as they walked the streets. Here was "a devotee beating his head with fearful violence upon a doorstep"; there "a Buddhist priest walking on his knees"; and Mr. Jackson wrote (July, 1850):—

> At this particular time of the year we can hardly stir out but we meet idolatrous processions. The gods are represented by immense pasteboard heads and bodies, with wooden arms, which are moved by strings. They are supported by men, who are covered with the long drapery flowing from the idols' necks; opposite to the man's face a hole is cut for the purpose of enabling him to see and breathe. It is enough to excite the smile of ridicule to notice the swaggering gait some of the men assume when they see the foreigner coming. Sometimes, as they can only see straight before them, in moving to one side of the way the idol's head gets a blow, and on one occasion his crown got knocked off. The people are "mad upon their idols."

Little missionary work could be done by men who as yet knew not the language; but Mr. Welton's dispensary, besides exerting a powerful influence in giving them favour in the sight of the people, was made a means of disseminating Gospel truth, a Chinese tract, directing the reader to the "True Physician," being given to every patient; and as for three or four years from 2,000 to 3,000 cases were treated annually, the way of life must have been made known very widely by this instrumentality. From 1852 to 1855 Mr. Welton laboured alone, Mr. Jackson having been removed elsewhere; and his perse-

verance soon enabled him to converse with the people. Among the villagers of the surrounding country, the frequenters of the plays performed in the temples by strolling actors, the students who flocked to Fuh-Chow for the literary examinations, the sick for whom his visits as a doctor were requested, the lepers in the village allotted for their separate residence, the Tartar soldiers in their distinct quarter of the city, and many other classes, we find him mingling freely, with the message of salvation ever on his lips. Everywhere "the common people heard him gladly"; he travelled from place to place without molestation; and even the extreme shyness at first manifested by the women gradually wore off. Colporteurs were also employed to sell or distribute Chinese Testaments; and in 1854 he succeeded in starting a school, which was soon well attended. Among those who sought his medical aid were the victims of opium, both the smokers and the friends of those who took it to destroy themselves:—

Aug. 7, 1850.—I have had applications from all classes of Chinese to cure them of opium smoking. They have generally, the better class especially, a great abhorrence of it, and pray for medicine to cure them of the habit. Their abhorrence extends to opium dealers; and the missionary who boldly opposes and decries the practice has a greater hold on the affections of the people. I always insist on the opium pipe being given up before I give medicine, as a test of sincerity. I have about fourteen pipes in my possession. Two persons earnestly besought me afterwards to restore them their pipes, which I resolutely refused. One man brought two persons with him, and tried to coerce me into it, but he did not succeed. I called to-day to see a married woman who had taken opium with a view to destroy herself. This is the common means of suicide among the Chinese. I am generally called to the opium suicides early in the morning, at daybreak, for the opium is taken at night, and the friends do not know it until the following morning, when some hours have elapsed, and all hope of recovery is past.

In June, 1855, after three years of patient sowing of the good seed alone, Mr. Welton was cheered by the arrival of two

fellow-labourers, the Revs. F. M'Caw and M. Fearnley; but in the following year his own health broke down, and he returned home to die. He entered into rest March, 1857, leaving a touching testimony to his love for the great cause in the shape of a legacy to the Society of £1,500. Meanwhile the young missionaries were hard at work upon the language; and one of Mr. Fearnley's letters vividly paints the difficulties of the task:—

Learning the language with my teacher, word by word, and sound by sound, and bringing every word into immediate use, in communication with my servants on domestic matters, or with the workers in wood and stone outside. Sounds have been my principal attention hitherto, practising incessantly the vowel sounds and tones, so utterly unlike anything the English ear and tongue have been accustomed to in their native land. The organs of speech have to be called off from many of their old actions, and forced violently into perpetually new motions and combinations. Latterly I have looked a little to the character, and I have felt quite refreshed by this partial relief of my overtasked ears and tongue, and employment of my yet unlaboured eyes.

In less than eighteen months after their arrival, however, they were able to begin preaching in public, and before this they were actively engaged in going from place to place conversing with the people. We append some extracts from their journals, as illustrations of the first attempts to set the message of salvation before the people of Fuh-Chow. Mr. Fearnley writes:—

Dec. 16, 1856.—Returned down the South Street towards my residence. As I had come up it, I had thought, "Well, this is too noisy and too crowded; one could not preach here; it would be a very good place, an admirable place, for a chapel; but one could not preach here in the open street; the press is too great, and the cries and noises too many." These had been my thoughts on going up the street; but, as I returned down it, a man, leaning over the counter of a wine-shop, seeing my blue bag, said, "Have you books?" and, on my answering in the affirmative, rejoined, "Give me a volume." By this time I was advanced close to his counter, and said to him, "But why do you want a volume? do you know

what doctrine it teaches?" "Yes, the doctrines of Jesus," said he. "Well," I said, "I will enunciate to you some of the doctrines of Jesus if you are willing to hear." And, without giving him the book immediately, I began to tell him and his fellow-shopman and some bystanders outside, a few of the great and glorious truths, which, rightly received, are able to make men wise unto salvation. Soon I heard a feeble voice close at my left hand, inquiring, in apparently earnest tones, whether Jesus was still alive; and, turning, found they proceeded from a very old and emaciated-looking man, who, by his pitiably poor and age-weary look, might reasonably put himself forward as one interested in a doctrine which spoke of a place where are the riches of everlasting pleasures, and where age and decay are unknown. Of course this question gave me an admirable starting point; and I declared to them, in no diffident terms I imagine, the eternal majesty of Him "who liveth and was dead, and, behold, He is alive for evermore."

After talking some time at this spot, and gradually turning away from the shop to address more audibly the now greatly-increased crowd, I acceded to the proposition of a barber, who was plying his trade at my left hand, and whose business was somewhat incommoded by the numbers of my auditory, and mounted a low stone breastwork which he pointed out to me on the opposite side of the road. Hither came all my previous audience, and more added themselves besides, for their standing-place was larger. And here, in the main street of Fuh-Chow, for as long a time as my voice would hold out in that open and noisy place, did I continue to address them, stimulated every now and then by some question put to me by one among the listeners, and unfolding to them, as well as my yet narrow vocabulary would permit, the fearful truths of judgment and eternity; and inviting them, while yet it was to-day, while yet the grave had not shut its mouth upon them, to seek the Saviour Christ Jesus. I gave only one book to a well-dressed literary-looking man at this place, besides the one, *i.e.*, that I left in the shop where I began my discourse, for the crowd was so dense, and it was utterly beyond my power to put the books into the hands of those to whom I wished them to come, viz., the more educated-looking among them. It was very pleasing, however, to see how perfectly free they were from any inclination to violence. In the very midst of the uproar, when a hundred hands were uplifted, and a hundred voices were shouting for a volume, and man and boy were pressing forward, and almost tumbling one over the other, in their eagerness to get the first chance of the coveted treasure, immediately I said, quietly but firmly,

that I would give no book more at that place, and proceeded to step down from my eminence among the people, they at once made way; not a hand was raised to take a volume from my bag. With the exception of a few who accompanied me along the street, talking quietly and courteously to me, they dispersed, and the stream of noise and talk and traffic resumed its usual current through the ever-busy South Street.

The man to whom I had given the volume, which was the New Testament, was one of those who accompanied me, and I employed the opportunity that his prolonged presence gave to enforce upon him the propriety of taking the book home, and quietly and carefully perusing it, assuring him that thus he could acquaint himself more fully with the doctrines of Jesus.

Turning out of the South Street, when a little beyond the Confucian temple, I walked leisurely on homeward, somewhat wearied and lowered in voice-power by my late exertion. But meeting several people with books in their hands, which I conjectured to have been given to them by my colleague, Mr. M'Caw, and which, on examination, I found to be really so—meeting these, I could not forbear taking a volume from the hand of a young man who held it, and questioning him as to the doctrine it taught. This soon brought a crowd about me, and the conversation and address from me which ensued was to me the most pleasing I had been engaged in that day. The first person that markedly engaged my attention was a tall, handsome-looking, well-dressed young man, who undertook, it would appear, to roast me a little for the amusement of the bystanders. "And this Jesus," he began, "if a man believes in Him he 'll go to heaven, will he?" "Yes, if he truly believes in Him, and so hates sin, which Jesus' soul hateth, trusting to His merits only, he will go to heaven." "Oh!" and a scornful smile played over his features the while, and I could see his side-look of ridicule to those beside him—"Oh! and what must we do if we believe in Jesus? what must we do? What must our course of conduct be?" There, I fancy, he considered that he had puzzled me, for his laugh was peculiarly joyous, and his side-wink to the bystanders exceedingly triumphant. But I told him that I would answer him very quickly if he would listen. "First," I said, "let the heart within think good thoughts. Jesus knows the thoughts, and all those who profess faith in Him must purify their thoughts. Secondly, let the mouth speak good and holy words—no falsehood, no wicked, no reviling words. (Here the Chinese offend grievously.) Thirdly, let the hand occupy itself in good deeds, not in stealing, not in fighting, not in

injuring men." As I gave him these three divisions of the conduct to be observed by those who wished to believe in Jesus, his face became more serious. My positions were founded on principles which he himself and his countrymen could not deny to be good. He turned his head and looked behind him when I uttered the first as if he were looking for somebody coming up in that direction; but really, if my thoughts misled me not, in a certain measure of disappointment that my answer gave him so little handle for ridicule. I called to him to listen to me again when he turned his head away, and gave him my second branch of Christian duty, and afterwards my third.

Another man, apparently a tradesman, brought an argument against both the power and benevolence of Jesus, and this scornfully and mockingly. Being of humble grade, his thoughts occupied with things material, he said, "I think that Jesus should make rice cheaper, that the people, now but scantily fed, might eat." "Why," I said, "if men were dealt with according to their deserts, it would be still dearer even than now."

Thus is it then, in the back-room away from the street, on the front shop threshold, in the open glare and toil and bustle of the main street, in the by-lane, in the little bay by the street side, where a wall perhaps recedes, and gives standing room in each and every place, by God's mercy, we are permitted and privileged to preach the everlasting Gospel.

Dec. 17.—It was curious to observe how much interest already had been excited in this part of the city. "Books, books," was the cry everywhere; and I could hear one little boy repeating to a man with whom he was walking some of my remarks respecting the sin of using bad language in the streets. Many shouted, as I thought in ridicule, "Jesus," "Jesus," "Jesus is very high." And, in addition to our common name of "foreign child," I heard one person calling after me, "Jesus' foreign child." So that that wondrous name has already begun its progress here; now in shame and contumely, but to end, we hope, in the mouths of many at least in glory and reverence.

Dec. 20.—To-day again went down into the streets to repeat my small attempt at preaching. Once, during the morning, before I went down, the thought came before me so vividly of my exceeding inaptitude for such a work, my yet lamentably scanty stock of words, my still scantier power of idiomatic construction of sentences, my far from perfect utterance of the tones—joined with all which, too, I reflected on the exceeding dissimilarity of the modes of thought of the people of this land and of my own land—and the result of the whole on my mind was, "Oh, how can I go?

How can I possibly stand there by a wall-side with a hundred staring Chinamen about me, and exhibit to them all my imperfections, and lay before them my uncouth modes of thought? How can I do this?" But yet, with all these thoughts, I did not for a moment say, "Shall I stay? Shall I omit to go?"

And Mr. M'Caw writes:—

Oct. 6, 1856.—Not being allowed as yet the use of a preaching-house in the city, I preached my first sermon to-day in the open street, one year and nearly four months since my arrival at this city. I found the people unusually well-disposed towards me. I took my stand on the steps leading into our carpenter's shop, and had a wide street in front, not without some misgivings as to the issue of the trial. On opening Genesis, and commencing to read aloud in the colloquial dialect, the people gathered around from the neighbouring shops, and all who passed along remained to hear. On the whole, I felt thankful and encouraged by the attention and behaviour of the crowd, meeting no annoyance from any one—unless from one silly creature, who, all the time I addressed them, never ceased inquiring why I shaved my lips but left my whiskers growing; and from another, who unceasingly inquired of what material my clothes were made.

Oct. 16.—Preached at the printer's door, corner of Great South Street. When I had spoken some time, a smart-looking man asked me if I had any opium. "No," I said, "I don't use it, nor do the true worshippers of Jesus use it either." "What countryman are you?" was his next question. "Englishman," I answered. "And you do not smoke opium? Do not your countrymen bring it here?" He then turned to the crowd, with an air of triumph, raising his hand and shaking it aloft, soon enlisting all the audience on his side; and to make the scene more ludicrous—to say nothing worse of it—in the midst of all the confusion an old woman, apparently above sixty, came forward, and clenching her hand, shook it up at my face in desperate rage. I remained quiet for some time, until the noise abated; then I addressed them on the subject, and told them that I came here to teach them a religion which condemned all such evil drugs and practices.

Nov. 12.—Preached at the carpenter's door to a large assembly. Afterwards, in company of Mr. Fearnley, visited a great display of priests and idols up in the city. There was a row of tents erected over an old canal in the centre of the street, which were decorated with the

most gorgeous materials within, images being set up in various places, before which multitudes of priests made their lustrations, and chanted hymns. One of the figures represented an Englishman in full dress; and on our appearance at the tent all commenced to laugh, in which we joined, as it was the only way we could meet the difficulty. I inquired the name of the god-man, and was told it was a "Quei," which means a devil. This grand exhibition, I was informed, takes place once only in twelve years, and is got up for the releasing of souls out of hell or purgatory.

Dec. 11.—Two of our mandarin friends paid me a visit when at breakfast, so I embraced the opportunity of having them at prayers. Each took in his hand a New Testament, and read in turn with ourselves, our usual way of conducting daily prayer. Then they kneeled down while I prayed. They inquired whether I prayed thus daily.

Dec. 22.—Took the colporteur in company, and went to the part of the city where the governor and officials chiefly reside. I selected a large square, a general thoroughfare of the higher classes, and commenced to read. Soon a large company assembled and listened attentively. One fine old-looking gentleman asked me where the soul went after death. While I explained life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel, all listened attentively, until my strength was exhausted speaking so loud in the open square. When I ordered the books to be opened for distribution, I began giving New Testaments to the more respectable present; but the rush was so great that I was driven behind a pile of timber, which all fell down about my legs, without, however, any injury to any one. The colporteur would have been almost devoured had I not got the bag of books into my own hands, from which I endeavoured to put books into the hands of the higher classes present.

Dec. 29.—Preached near the white pagoda in the city. Never being in that part of the city, as a preacher, the interest was great, and the curiosity much greater. The ladies came out of their dark recesses to get a look and a laugh at the foreigner; and the doors were nearly all full of these sunless, obscure, delicate-footed creatures, just like the story of the churchyard ghosts—all white, and not a trace of blood apparently in their veins.

Dec. 30.—Addressed a small party at the printer's door, when one bold man soon came forward to question me concerning the strange doctrine. He called upon me openly to show Jesus to them, and then teach them how to worship Him. "Jesus is now in heaven, so I cannot show Him to you; but He sees you and hears your language." "Will He

not come here at all?" said he in reply. "He will at the last day," I answered. "You say that men in your side—western countries—saw Him; but how can I believe such talk?" This he said with great emphasis, appealing to the crowd. "Do you believe," I said, "that there is an emperor in China?" "I do," he said. "Have you seen him, or any of these men present?" "No, we have not," was his reply. "And how, then, can you believe there is an emperor?" I asked with some emphasis. Nearly all present, without waiting for more of the controversy, turned upon him with a shout of laughter, which so upset him that he ran off, considering himself defeated. I see they are open to logic and conviction like other people.

Neither, it will be seen, found any lack of willing hearers; but neither was spared to the Mission long enough to have the joy of seeing any of these hearers turning from idols to serve the living God. Mr. M'Caw's career in particular, though giving great promise of future usefulness, was a brief one indeed. His wife had been taken from him within a few months of her landing in China, and after two years' faithful labour he too died of fever in August, 1857. Another two years saw the Mission deprived also of Mr. Fearnley, who was obliged by his wife's illness to leave; and though in the meanwhile the Rev. G. Smith had arrived at Fuh-Chow, this again left the work to a single labourer unfamiliar with the language.

Long, however, before Mr. Smith could speak with any comfort or readiness, he was going in and out among the people, setting before them with a stammering tongue, but with the loving heart of a true missionary, the claims and the invitations of the Gospel. We have already seen the ordinary incidents of such work, and need not repeat them. But one passage in Mr. Smith's journal is worth noticing, as it introduces us to a department of evangelistic work in Fuh-Chow, which must have severely tried both his patience and his moral courage.

In China, the honour attached to the attainment of literary degrees is extraordinary, and success in the examinations is an

indispensable qualification, not only for official employment, but for social position. There are four of these degrees. The first, to attain which the candidate must pass three examinations, is called *Siu-Tsai*, or "Budding Talent." It raises the possessor of it above the common people, and exempts him from corporal punishment, but it does not qualify him for Government employ. The second degree, called *Ku-Jin*, or "Promoted Man," qualifies for the lower offices. The examination for it is held every three years, in all the eighteen provincial capitals; and there are generally from five to ten thousand candidates at each capital. The third, called *Tsin-Sz*, or "Advanced Scholar," is the entrance to higher official life, and the examination, also triennial, is held only at Peking. The fourth degree of *Han-Lin*, or, as it may be called, "Academician," is only attained by the few who aspire to the highest posts, and is conferred with much ceremony at the imperial palace. The triennial examination for the second degree was held at Fuh-Chow in 1859, and the city was crowded with candidates from every part of the province of Fuh-Kien; and Mr. Smith resolved, if he could not speak intelligibly to these students, that he would at least distribute copies of the Scriptures at the door of the examination hall:—

Aug. 15.—This year the examinations for the Ku-Jin, or second literary degree, take place in this city. Consequently the place is crowded with reading men from every part of this large province, and it forms an admirable opportunity for spreading far and wide a knowledge of the truth. To-day we went down with a large number of copies of the Scriptures, to take advantage of the opportunity thus presented. After waiting about two hours, during which we engaged in conversation with the people standing about the place, the beating of a drum, a loud report produced by a kind of cracker, and the commencement of some very unharmonious music, announced the speedy exit of some of the anxious candidates, to each of whom we proffered a volume out of our treasures, and only in two instances were they declined. Some, getting one volume, came to us to

complete the set. Besides ourselves, two American brethren were engaged in the same good work. Nor was Satan altogether idle; he had a servant there distributing short tracts concerning Kwang-Ing, the goddess of mercy, according to the Chinese. Another was endeavouring to procure merit by distributing perfumes to the scholars, including ourselves in his favours. Others were equally busy, perhaps even more perseveringly so, in selling tea and refreshments to the weary candidates.

Aug. 17.—Again distributing Scriptures to the literary men. It may be that many will not be read, many not even taken home; but if only one or two should be instrumental in turning an idolater from the error of his way, all our expenditure and fatigue will be more, far more, than repaid.

Aug. 19.—At the examination hall again with copies of the precious Word. Whilst waiting, we got into conversation with a literary man from Iong-Ping, a city about 110 miles further up the river. He had received books both from us and the American missionaries on a former day, and commenced his conversation by remarking on their contents. Thus one instance came to our knowledge in which our books had received some attention. Perhaps this man, on his return, may read the strange books to others, and thus the seed of life be introduced into his far distant city.

Aug. 21.—Again at our post, though a wearisome work, and one from which no immediate result is to be anticipated. Yet we feel it our duty and our privilege to sow the seed, leaving it perchance to others to reap the harvest. On this occasion many of the candidates under examination belonged to the city. This drew a large crowd of their friends to the place, which rendered our work much more difficult. This time, too, it was quite dark before the doors were opened, which added to our task, by making it more difficult for the candidates to see the offered books, and for us to distinguish them from the crowd; and at last, fatigued and exhausted, we had to wend our way home without quite emptying our baskets.

The following additional entry in his journal takes us behind the scenes with regard to these examinations :—

Aug. 26.—At the beginning of this month my teacher complained of weakness from the excessive heat, and expressed his inability to come for the whole day, proposing to come but half the day and receive but half pay. Knowing the Chinese greediness for money, and feeling the effects of the heat myself, I supposed him to be sincere, and consented to his

proposal. After a few days his eyes became very bad, and he was unable to come at all. This, too, is a very common ailment among the Chinese, and did not excite my suspicion. But at the end of the month I was surprised by an unblushing confession, entirely unasked for, that he had got permission to stay away in order to write minute copies of the Chinese classics for the use of men going into the examinations, for them to secrete in their clothes, and this had made his eyes bad. This man has been with missionaries now about eight years, and is in the habit of explaining the Scriptures to our people. We have every reason to fear that his heart is thoroughly seared against the truth, yet are obliged to retain him in order to get a knowledge of the language. This is not the least of a missionary's trials.

Ten years had now elapsed. Diligently and prayerfully had the sowers scattered the good seed over the Happy City and the surrounding valley. But while year after year the fertile and well-watered plain yielded its earthly produce to the labours of the agriculturist—while the rice and the tobacco and the sugar-cane flourished, and crop after crop was gathered in—while the countless chests piled up on the wharves for export showed that the tea plantations, too, in the uplands failed not amply to reward the cultivators—the spiritual husbandman waited, and waited, and looked in vain for any sign that the seed of the kingdom had even taken root, much less was springing up. The people were hearers, indeed, and willing hearers, but they were wayside hearers. The Gospel grain fell upon hearts not only naturally hard, but trodden over by the petrifying tramp of superstition, and ignorance, and vice.

But how was it that the earth yielded its increase in regular and unchanging order? Was it not because He whose power alone gives "rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness," had given His Divine decree that "while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night,

shall not cease"? And if the same God has also promised to the spiritual sower that "in due season he shall reap, if he faint not," would not the very fact that the one promise was fulfilled before the eyes of the missionaries year by year be the assurance to them that, in the Lord's time, the other must needs be fulfilled also?

And so it was. Though sickness or death had removed Welton, and M'Caw, and Fearnley, and the wives of the two latter, the new-comer, Mr. Smith, "fainted not," and "in due season," as we shall see, he did reap.

'Mid the tread of many feet,
'Mid the hurry and the throng,
In the burden and the heat,
Have the working hours seemed long?
Softly the shadow falls,
And the pilgrim's race is run;
While through celestial halls
Resounds the glad "*Well done!*"

Well worth the daily cross;
Well worth the earnest toil;
Well worth reproach and loss,
The fight on stranger soil!
Let us lift our hearts and pray,
And take our journey on;
Work while 'tis called to-day
With the thought of that "Well done!"

Author of Copsley Annals.

Fret not for sheaves; a holy patience keep;
Look for the early and the latter rain,
For all that faith hath scattered love shall reap.
Gladness is sown: thy Lord may let thee weep,
But not one prayer of thine shall be in vain.

Anna Shipton.

CHAPTER III.

FUH-CHOW.—THE FIRST-FRUITS OF THE HARVEST.

Let it alone this year also.—*St. Luke* xiii. 8.
In due season we shall reap, if we faint not.—*Gal.* vi. 9.

Praise Him that He gave the rain
To mature the swelling grain;
For His mercies still endure
Ever faithful, ever sure.

And hath bid the fruitful field
Crops of precious increase yield;
For his mercies still endure
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Praise Him for our harvest-store
He hath filled the garner floor;
For His mercies still endure
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Sir H. W. Baker.

IN 1860, the tenth year "without one single conversion, or prospect of such a thing," the Home Committee were seriously discussing the expediency of abandoning Fuh-Chow. With the more promising Missions further north, in the Cheh-Kiang province, undermanned, was it right to cling to a place where God seemed to be withholding His blessing? But Mr. Smith, on hearing this, made a most earnest appeal to be allowed to remain. Not for three years (as in our Lord's parable), but for ten, had fruit been sought, and none found; yet the

patient "dresser of the vineyard" begged that the fruitless tree might be "let alone that year also." And *that very year* the reward so long looked for, and so unceasingly prayed for, began to be vouchsafed. On December 22nd, 1860, Mr. Smith wrote home, "I hope that a brighter day is about to dawn upon us. There are three men whom I really look upon as honest inquirers."

It is interesting to observe that the very agency first employed (by Mr. Welton) to sow the seed at Fuh-Chow—that of medical skill—was now the instrument used by God to reap the first-fruits. The Rev. W. H. Collins, now our missionary at Peking, but then stationed at Shanghai, and who is a qualified surgeon (an M.R.C.S.), paid a visit to Mr. Smith, and during his stay opened a temporary dispensary, to which numbers resorted. Earnestly were the claims and invitations of the Gospel pressed upon the applicants for medicine; and the inquirers referred to in Mr. Smith's letter were the result of this effort. Their names were Tang, Sing Siu Kieng, and Sing Puo Sieng, the last a literary graduate.

The two former were in different ways instrumental in bringing in a fourth inquirer. Tang procured a native house for Mr. Smith to preach in, but he and the man who let it were at once arrested by the prefect of the city and thrown into prison. Sing Siu Kieng, who had been a Government official, obtained access to the gaol to visit the two men; and, besides alleviating their sufferings, seized the opportunity, with the zeal of a new convert, to speak to other prisoners of the Saviour he had found, and to read and pray with them. A young man, named Sia Siu Sieng, was there on a false charge of embezzlement, "whose heart the Lord opened to attend to the things spoken"; and on his release shortly after, which was brought about by Siu Kieng's mediation, he came to Mr. Smith for further instruction. Tang and Siu Kieng

were baptized on March 31st, 1861, and Puo Sieng and Siu Sieng on July 4th of the same year. On the latter date Mr. Smith touchingly writes: "With only these few converts I begin to feel something of the anxieties and fears and doubts, but something also of the joys, of which St. Paul speaks. They are indeed as children: oh! that the Lord may give me grace to be a father to them."

The prospects of the Mission now rapidly brightened. Other inquirers came forward; the authorities at last conceded the right of opening preaching chapels and schools within the city, which was speedily availed of; crowds of attentive listeners attended the services thus established; books and tracts in large numbers were eagerly purchased, so much so that free distribution was suspended; the colporteurs sent to the surrounding villages met with a most encouraging reception; and, best of all, Mr. Smith was able to write at the beginning of 1863, "Our converts have all given us satisfactory evidence of their faith in Christ during the past year; and in the face of persecution, reproach, and want, caused by their adherence to the doctrines of our dear Redeemer, have kept the faith." A girls' boarding-school was opened by Mrs. Smith, to which day scholars also were invited; but in vain, for "the poor little things, with their crippled feet, could not get up and down the hill." The barbarous custom which thus hindered the success of the school also disabled many women from attending the services who would gladly have come. A boys' school, started rather later, was more successful.

In the summer of 1862 the Rev. J. R. Wolfe joined the Mission; and this reinforcement encouraged Mr. Smith to look out into the regions beyond, and begin to form plans for sending the Gospel to them. The great island of Formosa, only a day's sail from Fuh-Chow, particularly called forth his sympathies; and all that he heard of the populous cities and

innumerable villages in the interior of the Fuh-Kien province, sounded in his ears as a call to "come and help them" also.

But now, once more, in the mysterious providence of God, a dark cloud was to overshadow the Mission. In October, 1863, it was for the third time bereft of its leader. The call came to Mr. Smith to "go up higher," and while the faithful servant was entering into the joy of his Lord, Mr. Wolfe entered upon the sole charge of the work. Within two months he too was brought to the verge of the grave by dangerous sickness. "It pleased the Lord to spare him," said the Committee in reporting this further trial, "lest we should have sorrow upon sorrow"; but he had to retire for a time to Hong-Kong for the recovery of his health, and Fuh-Chow was once more without a C.M.S. missionary.

Very different, however, was the state of the Mission from what it had been when former bereavements occurred. There was now a Native Church, small indeed in numbers, but strong in faith and zeal. Mr. Smith left behind him thirteen baptized members and five converts awaiting baptism. Sing Siu Kieng, and a faithful and able convert of the American Mission named Wong Kiu-taik, acted as pastors and evangelists, and hundreds attended their daily preaching in two chapels in the heart of the city. The Great Shepherd did not forsake His sheep; and although while Mr. Wolfe was still lying sick four hundred miles away, a severe trial was permitted to come upon them, their faith was sustained, and all was graciously overruled for good.

In the early part of 1864 a violent outbreak of popular fury arose against the work of another society labouring in the city, and the C.M.S. Mission was not spared. The rioters destroyed a preaching chapel, schools, Mission-library, and dwellings of the Native agents, did much damage to other property, and inflicted severe injuries on such Chinese Christians

as they could lay hold of. In one night, seemingly, the work of years was undone. We can imagine what a sore trial all this must have been to a little band of recent converts, with no missionary to cheer their hearts and explain that it was no "strange thing" that had happened unto them. Two inquirers took alarm, and withdrew, though we believe they afterwards returned; but not one baptized member wavered. And what was the general result? Not only did Mr. Wolfe, on his return, succeed in getting full compensation for damage done, so that he was able at once to rebuild the wrecked Mission premises, but the riots did a real service to the work by bringing Christianity prominently before people of all classes. Men who had hitherto not known, or not noticed, what was going on, began to inquire what this new doctrine really was. Crowds flocked to the rebuilt chapels; false and gross reports which had been circulated were discredited; the notion that Christians could only be abhorred by all right-thinking folk for their vile and wicked lives was corrected; an anonymous book appeared, evidently the production of a heathen little acquainted with Christianity, but defending the missionaries; and one of the converts said, "It is much easier to be a Christian now than it was twelve months ago, before the riots."

Yet domestic persecution continued, and the Master's words were fulfilled, "A man's foes shall be them of his own household." Mr. Wolfe wrote, "Our two catechists and the schoolmaster have to bear a great deal for the sake of Christ, even from their own families. They do indeed suffer shame for the name of the Lord Jesus. I am persuaded it does them good, but it is not pleasant to the flesh." The zeal also of these Chinese brethren was exemplary, and it was not fruitless. Of some of the converts, who came in one by one at this time, it is mentioned that they were brought to Christ by the instrumentality of Wong Kiu-taik.

One of these new converts was a very interesting case. He was a most bitter opponent of the Mission, and used to come to the chapel on purpose to interrupt the service and abuse the catechist. One day he was so violent that he had to be turned out, after which he did not appear again for some months, and was quite lost sight of. But one Sunday Mr. Wolfe, noticing a stranger listening attentively, went and spoke to him. "Sing-sang" (*i.e.*, Sir), said the stranger, "don't you know me?" It was the very man, but Mr. Wolfe had not recognised him. He had not come under any other human Christian influence during his absence, but the Spirit of God had been his teacher; he had given up idolatry, and now wished to "be a Christian and worship Jesus." He placed himself under regular instruction, and at length his baptism was fixed for Christmas Day, 1864. At this he hesitated, saying, "I am not worthy to be baptized on the day my Saviour was born into the world"; but the appropriateness of the day for an event which was to be the sign and seal of his "new birth unto righteousness," having been pointed out, he not only came forward himself to the font, but brought his little daughter in his arms to consecrate her also to the service of Christ. His name was Ling, to which was now added as a Christian name Cheng Seng (*i.e.*, highest degree of faith); and he afterwards became a useful catechist. He had carried on a lucrative business in connection with the idol temples. This he now gave up, which brought upon him much persecution, and he was often followed in the streets by a crowd of people blaspheming that holy Name by which he was now called. Another of the new converts brought a storm upon his head by resigning his situation as foreman in a mercantile establishment, because he would neither work on the Lord's Day nor be a party to the deceit and fraud practised in the trade.

In the following year another Ling was added to the Church,

and of him and one or two who were baptized with him Mr. Wolfe sent some interesting particulars :—

Lo Ling and his family have been receiving instruction for the last ten months. He has had to endure a great deal for Christ's sake, but he has remained faithful. His only daughter, who had been betrothed to a heathen, became a believer in Jesus, and constantly prayed and showed evidence, if not of real conversion, at least of deep interest in the truth. Her father was most anxious to have the engagement broken off, and the girl herself was equally desirous for a dissolution of the contract; but her reputed husband would not listen to it, and determined at once to marry her, and so prevent her becoming a Christian. The girl's father could not prevent this, and so made all the necessary preparations for the wedding-feast, &c. But now came the hour of his trial. His son-in-law's party did all they could, by entreaty, by promise, and by threats, to persuade him to give up Christianity, but nothing seemed to move him. His answer was, "I have decided to become a Christian and worship Jesus." During this time of his trial the Christians were in constant prayer for him, and to this I attribute his victory.

The day of the marriage was a most exciting one. Lo Ling asked me how he should manage, for that he wished to have the Christians' prayers said on the occasion. I told him I feared my presence would excite the fury of the opposite party, and perhaps bring on a repetition of last year's troubles, but that he might ask Kiu-taik and others of the catechists to be present; that perhaps their presence would be tolerated; and if matters assumed a reasonable appearance, Kiu-taik, the senior catechist, would pray and read the Word of God. I pointed out to my faithful native brother appropriate portions to be read on the occasion, but warned him not to attempt anything unless he saw a favourable opportunity. The catechists went, but they found the bridegroom's party unmanageable, They could do nothing. In the meanwhile the mob had assembled about the door, and threatened to pull down the house, which is the property of the Mission, and said something about tearing down our church. They hooted one of the American missionaries who happened to pass at the time. When the bridal chair left the house, the streets all along were lined on both sides with men and women, using the most abusive language towards the bride and her family, crying out, "Ha! ha! come see the bride going to worship the kàu tâu," *i.e.*, the head of the religion, meaning the missionary. The bridegroom and his

party were infuriated, and returned in the evening to Lo Ling's house, and heaped abuse and threats upon the poor fellow, but he bore it all very well; and when telling me about it afterwards, he said, "It did not become a Christian to return evil for evil." They refused the bride to return to her father's house to pay the ordinary visit of ceremony. This was the greatest mark of disrespect they could show towards the parents of the bride, and poor Lo Ling felt it keenly.



CHINESE CHILDREN.

But what of the poor girl? Why, she was dragged from her father's house amidst torrents of abuse, and taken to a heathen home, where she was commanded to fall down and worship the domestic and ancestral idols. Did she at once renounce her faith in Christ? Ah! no. She at once refused to bow her knee to the idols, and said she had learned to worship the one living and true God. But this did not satisfy her cruel husband, who stood by ready to enforce his wicked commands with

threats and blows. Poor girl! it was a great trial for her. Her husband, however, could not prevail over her faith, and all he could do was to elicit from his wife the exclamation, "I am a Christian, I am a Christian." . . .

And now about Chiong Hok, one of our schoolboys, who renounced heathenism, and was baptized yesterday with the others. He has attended our school for more than a year, and has from the very first shown deep interest and a remarkable comprehension of the truth. His progress in Scripture knowledge has been most satisfactory. Frequently on Sunday evenings, when I publicly examine and catechise all the Christians—children and adults—in the chapel, he has, by his ready comprehension and intelligence, put many of the adult members to shame. I have for a long time taken a particular interest in him. For the last few months, in addition to his intelligent answering, I have observed in him a very thoughtful and serious spirit; but I had not the slightest expectation that he was meditating the important step which he took yesterday. He seemed to have very clear notions of prayer, and appeared fully to appreciate the doctrine of redemption through Christ. I felt persuaded myself that the Holy Spirit was working on the boy's mind. A few weeks ago I gave an address on baptism. A few days after, Chiong Hok sent a message through the schoolmaster to the effect that he wished very much to become a Christian, and requested to be baptized at the same time as the other candidates. On examining him I found his desire sincere. I asked the head catechist to examine him more thoroughly, and report to me the result. He did so, and reported very satisfactorily. But his tender age (twelve years), and the fact that his father was a heathen, seemed to me at first very great difficulties in admitting him to baptism. I told the boy I was satisfied with his intelligence, &c., but I feared I could not, without his father's consent, receive him as a candidate for baptism. He said that was no difficulty, for that his father was quite willing; that he had obtained his father's consent long before he spoke to me on the subject. I then sent for the father, and spoke to him on the subject, and laid the whole matter before him as plainly as possible. It appears that the boy had been meditating the step for some months before he let us know a word about it, and had been teaching his father what he himself had, as we hope and believe, been taught of God. The father at once gave his consent. After this we consulted the native Christians on the subject, and they all agreed in thinking the boy ought to be admitted to baptism. May God bless the lad!

The Mission was not now left to a single missionary. The Rev. A. W. Cribb had arrived in November, 1864, and after passing through the usual weary period of hard study of the language, was actively engaged in useful labours.

A few brief extracts from his journals will illustrate some features of his itinerating work :—

Tuesday, Dec. 5, 1865.—After my morning studies and an early dinner, I went out again into the villages to preach and distribute books. I took Ling, the colporteur, with me and visited three villages, at each of which we addressed the people. I commenced talking to them and got a good congregation, and then asked Ling to make them thoroughly understand what I had been saying, in case any had not quite caught my meaning. All listened with great attention. As I was wending my way towards another village, we came to two large fish ponds with a narrow earthen pathway between them. The colporteur went in front, and I followed on my horse. When we had nearly crossed, we found an opening in the path about one and a half feet wide. The horse made a jump, but as the colporteur was too close in front she attempted to jump to his right, and, in doing so, her hind legs slipped into the pond on the left. In attempting to get up, her front legs slipped into the pond on the right and thus we were worse off than before. I was, however, able to dismount, and then by some means or other she got her whole body into the pond on the right. At this moment a Chinaman came forward to help, and seizing her by the bridle pulled violently, and the horse at the same time slipping again, the bridle broke and came off in our hands, leaving her free. She then swam across the pond to an easier place of ascent, and then ran away, being somewhat frightened at what had occurred. It was not without great difficulty I succeeded in catching her just as she was rolling in a fresh ploughed field. A man who had seen the accident then called out to those standing near me, "Is he a teacher of the doctrines of Jesus? Why then did not Jesus protect him?" At this the people laughed, and thought this a cause of triumph. I endeavoured to show that I had been protected, and that as it was I had not even any of the mud of the pond upon me, and the only harm my horse had sustained was a wetting and a roll in the dirt, which made her a wretched object for the time, but would all brush off when dry; therefore, considering the danger I had been exposed to, I had great cause for thankfulness. The bystanders

seemed satisfied, and the man walked away not quite so triumphantly as he had anticipated. I then made the best of my way home.

Monday, Jan. 22.—This afternoon I went out again into the villages, leaving the city by the West Gate. Preached at Se-ang-seng and Tan-tie. At the former place about fourteen assembled to hear us, one of whom was a great opium smoker. At Tan-tie we had about thirty adults, all of whom listened very attentively. One old man asked several questions. On my return I saw a part of the body of a child lying near a pond; the head and all the upper part of the body had been devoured by the dogs and birds. It was a horrid sight. I should think the child had been thrown from the city wall alive, its destroyer's aim being to drown it in the pond, but it fell four or five yards from the edge of it. About ten or twelve yards from the spot was a wooden image. I understood my helper to say that when the heathen bury a child they also bury an image of that kind with it. The one I saw was new, and neither child nor image could have been lying there many hours. I imagine that they must have been thrown there during the night, or early this morning; and as the child's body had been supposed to have gone into the water, the idol was intended to go there too, to preserve the child's spirit in the other world. Such is the cruelty, inhumanity, and superstition of heathens.

Monday, Jan. 29.—Studied with my teacher the various terms of etiquette used in conversation. Had an early dinner and went out into the villages. Went first to a place called Tan-tie, though not the same as that visited last Monday. Here the congregation we gathered was composed chiefly of women. They were very talkative, and for every sentence we spoke to them they must ask three or four questions as to my age, clothes, abode, &c. I fear they will remember very little we said to them. The afternoon was very hot indeed, and I was afraid to venture too far in the sun, so coming to a tree which afforded good shade I sat down till it was time to return home and the sun was losing power. Many persons gathered round us and we had a long talk to them. One man stayed over an hour, and then walked part of the way home with us. As usual, we were asked more than once what we gave to those who embrace our religion. Anything in the shape of dollars would bring numbers of converts into the church, but such as would do no good. They cannot understand why I go into the villages. To-day I was frequently asked what I had come to buy—fields? or sugar-canes? or what?

Friday, March 2.—This afternoon I went to a village called Se-iong,

and found several men playing at cards where I had hoped to preach. I told them my errand, and they desired me to preach, saying that they could hear and play too. Knowing their thoughts would be too much set on their game lest they should lose their money, I walked a little further and, though raining a little, stood in the open air and addressed those who assembled. We remained there about two hours answering their many questions. All were very attentive, and as there was no business going on none left us till we had finished speaking. Before we closed there were about forty persons round us. One man seemed particularly interested and asked many questions. He said the doctrines we taught were very good, but he was afraid he could not embrace them. We asked him, "Why not?" he replied, "Because I am engaged in business." I told him that this was no impediment, as we did not wish him to forsake his calling, but only to carry it on in accordance with the teaching of Scripture, viz., honestly. This, he said, was his difficulty: he was a fish dealer, and when a person asked him the price of his fish he was obliged "to tell a lie," or he could not sell. For instance, if he asked 120 cash per pound for it, he would perhaps be offered 80 cash. Then, after protesting for some time that he spoke the truth and could not sell under, the buyer would advance his offer to 100 cash, which was about the real value of the fish. "If, then," said he, "I asked the true price at first I should get no profit at all and so must starve." We tried to show him that truthfulness would after a short time answer best, and that in the end he would be likely to gain rather than lose. He admitted that this might be the case after a time when he become known, but said he would have to starve in the meanwhile. We distributed some tracts; may the Holy Spirit apply them to the hearts of all who read them!

In the following year the converts were doubled, and the number rose to fifty, and this, be it observed, not by the half-hearted adherence of whole villages or families coming in *en masse*, but by the subjugation of individual souls, one by one, to the obedience of Christ. This year was also marked by decided tokens of spiritual growth in the little Church—"increased prayerfulness, more zeal for the conversion of others, a deeper acquaintance with the truth, greater boldness for Christ, and less shrinking from the shame of the Cross." Severe discipline was exercised in one or two cases of inconsistency by excluding

the offenders from the Lord's Table. This had a wholesome effect generally, and the backsliders themselves came back in deep penitence to be readmitted. Persecution, more or less trying, continued, and the hostility of the literary classes was undiminished—a regular association being formed by them to oppose the missionaries, and particularly to prevent Chinamen from selling or renting premises to them. But the common people gladly heard the message of salvation; a weekly discussion class was successfully carried on, and proved very useful for the exposition of Christian principles; the Scriptures were widely distributed; and one man was converted, without instruction by the missionaries, by reading a copy of St. Matthew's Gospel. No wonder Mr. Wolfe could write, "The year 1866 has closed in hope, and the year 1867 has opened with brighter prospects than ever."

The few that truly call Thee Lord,
And wait Thy sanctifying word,
And Thee their utmost Saviour own;
Unite and perfect them in one.

O let them all Thy mind express,
Stand forth Thy chosen witnesses:
Thy power unto salvation show,
And perfect holiness below.

In them let all mankind behold,
How Christians lived in days of old;
Mighty their envious foes to move,
A proverb of reproach—and love.

Call them into Thy wondrous light,
Worthy to walk with Thee in white!
Make up Thy jewels, Lord, and show
The glorious, spotless Church below!

C. Wesley.

CHAPTER IV.

FUH-CHOW.—BUILDING UP THE CHURCH.

Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.—*Acts* xiv. 22, 23.

And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.—*Acts* xvi. 5.

Other ground can no man lay;
Jesus takes our sins away;
Jesus the foundation is,
This shall stand, and only this:
Fitly framed in Him we are,
All the building rises fair;
Let it to a temple rise,
Worthy Him Who fills the skies.

Build us in one body up,
Call'd in one high calling's hope:
One the Spirit Whom we claim;
One the pure baptismal flame;
One the faith, and common Lord;
One the Father lives adored,
Over, through, and in us all
God incomprehensible.

C. Wesley.



HEN Mr. Wolfe wrote, "The year 1867 opens with brighter prospects than ever," it was with reference, not only to the improved prospects at Fuh-Chow, but also, and specially, to the newly-commenced work in the country districts. It was in that very

year, 1867, that the harvest of souls in the newly-occupied out-stations began to spring up. The preaching of the catechists at Lieng-Kong, Lo-Nguong, A-chia, and Ku-Cheng, was rewarded with several deeply interesting conversions, and it was evident that a new epoch in the history of the Mission had begun. Of this work, which, in ten years, has resulted in the gathering into the Church of more than twelve hundred Chinese converts, distributed among more than fifty towns and villages, we shall give a full account in subsequent chapters. But before proceeding to do so, we continue the general history of the Mission, and particularly that of Fuh-Chow itself.

We now come to what may be called a building-up period. We find the Bishop of Victoria (Hong-Kong), Dr. Alford, twice visiting the Mission, administering the rite of Confirmation to the converts, and ordaining the first Chinese clergyman in Fuh-Kien. We find measures taken by the missionaries for the training of Native teachers and evangelists. We find useful Christian books being translated into the Chinese language. And we find trial and persecution purifying the Church, and welding the true members more closely to their Divine Head and to one another.

But we must first go back a little, and refer briefly to the building of the *material* church; for the Mission now had a house of prayer in the heart of the city worthy of the capital, and of the growing congregation, provided in the most gratifying manner. The European merchants, struck with the manifest blessing vouchsafed to the work, had subscribed 3,000 dollars for this purpose, and the new church had been publicly and solemnly opened on October 8th, 1865. Mr. Cribb gives an interesting account of the church itself, and of the opening service :—

It is a solid building of brick, after the Gothic style. You enter from the street into a small porch, and from thence into the body of the church.

The roof is of open woodwork varnished, supported by pillars of wood covered with a kind of concrete (which the Chinese call "sangkah"), which makes them look like granite. From the capitols of these springs an elliptic arch, which reaches to the roof, the space between the main beams and uprights of the roof and the arch being filled in with trellis work. The seats are something like those now put in new churches, being open, with elliptic pointed tops, and a Gothic circle cut in them. The pulpit stands on the south, and the reading-desk on the north side of the chancel, and the lectern between them. They are all of wood varnished. The chancel is raised by four steps, and the floor of it and of the aisles also is painted to imitate encaustic tiles, with a *fleur de lis* in the centre of each. The Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments are written in gold on a black ground, after the Chinese custom of writing on slabs. Over the chancel arch is a large scroll, bearing the text in Chinese, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men." On the walls also between each of the windows are small scrolls of various forms, with appropriate texts of Scripture upon them. The font, which is handsomely carved in stone, stands at the entrance to the church, between the two doors. A small harmonium standing in the north corner near the reading-desk and vestry completes the furniture. An architect who was present at the opening admired the building very much, and said he could find no fault in it; "everything is very nice"—and he was astonished that unprofessional hands should be able to erect such a structure without the aid of an architect. The bell which calls us to service is the one which hung at the forecastle of the famous ship *Childers*, which was wrecked here this year. Thus much for the building. It was erected at the cost of five thousand dollars, a good part of which was contributed by the merchants on the spot. It goes by the name of "Choi hieng tong," which I believe literally means "the hall of all good (or worthy) men," but which with more freedom we translate "All Saints' Church." In China it is considered disrespectful to a person to call a building after his name, or otherwise it would probably have been called "Christ Church," or after one of the apostles.

And now for the opening service. At our invitation several of the English merchants and American missionaries, together with the lieutenant of the gunboat and the lieutenant of the Anglo-Chinese contingent, came up to witness our proceedings. Divine service commenced at 11 o'clock. After singing in Chinese the well-known hymn, "Rock of Ages," I proceeded with the Morning Service in Chinese, our

chief helper, Kiu-taik, reading the Lessons. We then advanced to the font and Mr. Wolfe read the baptismal services, and baptized four adults and six children. Of the four adults, the first was a man named Ling, about forty years old, who has been an inquirer for several months; the second was his wife; the third his eldest son (the younger one being baptized as an infant); and the fourth a boy from our school, who is about twelve years old.

After the baptisms, which occupied a very long time, I read the remainder of Morning Service in English, and then the English portion of the community sang the hymn, "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun," after which Mr. Wolfe preached an excellent sermon from Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

The benediction was pronounced both in English and Chinese, and then the congregation (which numbered nearly two hundred) dispersed, all feeling greatly pleased at what they had seen and heard. Our church will seat about three hundred. We might have had it crammed to overflowing had we chosen to let in all who applied; but fearing a disturbance we obtained the assistance of two district policemen, who guarded the gate and admitted none but the members of our own or of the American Churches, and those who were known to us as quiet and orderly persons. As soon as this congregation had dispersed the church was filled by the eager and curious Chinese who had been unsuccessful in gaining admission to the first service. When all were seated, Kiu-taik ascended the pulpit, and explained the reason of our meeting together, the object we had in view in building the church, and then pointed them to Jesus as the only Saviour, and to Jehovah as the only true God. Mr. Wolfe added a few words, and then we separated.

In 1867, the opening of a new chapel in "North Street" gave the missionaries a third centre of evangelistic effort—the other two being the first chapel, in "South Street" (Nang-ka), and the new church in "Back Street." The new "North Street" chapel was the special charge of Mr. Cribb, who, having now mastered the language, was working vigorously. Besides the services at this chapel, and a share of those at the principal church, he took the north-western part of the province as a field for itineration, of which Ku-Cheng was the centre. He also systematically visited the villages

which in great numbers dot the plain of the Min around and above Fuh-Chow; and finding that the people, being in the fields at work, could not attend the preaching in the day-time, he made the experiment of renting a room in a village for a night meeting once a week. He would leave the city towards sunset, walk eight miles to the place, preach for an hour—the room being thronged—converse with inquirers, get supper and a little sleep, and return to Fuh-Chow at day-break. Further, he started a boarding-school for boys, on the plan which has done so much good in some parts of India; and, devoting some time to literary work, he produced in the next year or two a Chinese Reference New Testament and Harmony of the Gospels.

The attitude of the people at this time was friendly and respectful. Eight or nine persons were baptized in the city this year, among them "a high literary character" in the Chinese sense of the term, who was at once brought into useful service in helping to train the catechists.

It was in the early part of 1868 that the infant Church of Fuh-Kien had for the first time the advantage of an Episcopal visitation. Bishop Alford, who had lately come into his diocese, not only visited Fuh-Chow itself, but made a tour of two or three hundred miles among the out-stations, partly on foot and partly in the Chinese "sedan-chair." He held confirmations at Fuh-Chow, Lieng-Kong, Tang-Iong, Lo-Nguong, and Ku-Cheng; and no less than ninety Chinese Christians received "the laying on of hands" and ratified their baptismal vows. At some of the stations there were also candidates ready for baptism, whom the Bishop himself admitted into the Church. Of the confirmation in the city Bishop Alford wrote:—

The confirmation at Fuh-Chow took place on Wednesday afternoon, May 16th, 1868. It was an occasion of much interest to the converts.

Before 2 P.M. they had assembled in their excellent church, which standing up as it does above the native houses in the vast city, is, as you gaze upon it from the surrounding hills, one of the principal objects attracting notice. There are two millions of people within a radius of about five miles, the Mission church being taken as the centre point; and from the hill upon which our missionaries' houses stand, especially from its summit, where an altar is erected in adoration of heaven and earth, their habitations may be looked upon as "in a moment of time." It is a grand sight! Towering hills encircling the plain beneath; the broad river crowded with native shipping hastening to the sea; the temples and pagodas, and public buildings, and mass of human habitations; the busy hum of the multitude! But the Mission church is the object to which the eye turns with real delight; and within its walls that afternoon were assembled a congregation of devout and rejoicing Christian converts, already baptized in riper years and on their own profession, and now about to renew in confirmation, in presence of one another, and of the Church and her ministers and her Master, the solemn vow and promise of the baptismal covenant. I am sure that confirmation was no unmeaning ceremony that afternoon. Eighteen men, ten women, and five youths came forward, and to the confirmation question distinctly and separately replied, "I do"; and over each candidate, by the Bishop in English and the missionary in Chinese, the affecting prayer was offered, "Defend, O Lord, this Thy servant," &c. It was a novel sight to see the Chinese women publicly come forward and confess Christ, and to hear each one speak for herself. The seclusion in which the Chinese women delight to dwell makes it a breach almost of propriety on their part, according to Chinese notions, that they should appear, or even speak in public. It was no mean test of their sincerity that they consented so to do; and the missionaries rejoiced much in their behalf. One of these women is a schoolmistress, and is now a Chinese clergyman's wife, for her husband was ordained on Ascension Day, and an exemplary woman she is. Then, among the catechists there were tried men, who had suffered persecution, some even stripes and hard usage, as well as loss of property, for Christ's sake, and who now are in their respective spheres bold and zealous evangelists. Such were the candidates for confirmation on this occasion; and a more sincere, devout, and interesting band of Christians I can hardly suppose any bishop ever laid his hands upon.

On Ascension Day a still more important event in the

history of the Mission took place—the senior catechist, Wong Kiu-taik, being admitted by the Bishop to deacon's orders.

The story of this first Chinese clergyman in Fuh-Kien is very interesting. Wong was a young landscape painter in Fuh-Chow. An intimate friend of his, named Hu-Tong-mi, also a painter, was a Christian, a member of the church belonging to the American Episcopal Methodist Mission; and after much prayer and frequent earnest entreaties, he persuaded Wong to read the Scriptures and attend the public services; and very soon the result was manifest. Wong's mother, who was tenderly attached to her son, was warned that he was in danger, and ought to be looked after. "What is wrong?" she exclaimed; "my son has always been industrious and dutiful; what has happened?" "He attends the foreign church." "Impossible," cried the old lady; "it cannot be that my son would do such a thing." On questioning him, however, she found, to her horror, that it was only too true, and that although he "could not understand all the foreigners said," yet "it seemed very reasonable."

It needs some familiarity with the peculiar relations of parent and child in China to understand fully the power Wong's mother had over him. She kept him closely confined to the house, and tried in every way to shake his determination, weeping, scolding, and threatening by turns. But all to no purpose; and her wrath was intensified by continually hearing him praying, "Lord, bless my mother!" and invoking the hated name of "Jesus." At last she said, "Son, you must stop this praying." "Mother," said Wong, "I have always obeyed all your commands, but this I cannot do." "But the noise disturbs me." "Then I will pray silently." "You shall never pray in this house again." "Mother," said Wong, "I cannot stop praying." "Leave the house, then," she exclaimed; "I disown you for ever as my child, and when I die,



A CHINESE PAINTER.

dare not to join with the family in celebrating my funeral obsequies."

This "terrible anathema," as Bishop Alford calls it in the narrative from which we take these particulars*—and in China no curse could be more dreadful—drove Wong from his home, but not from his faith. He went and lived with his friend Hu, and rapidly grew in knowledge and grace. One day his mother sent to bid him come to her. He could only think it was a plot to seize and kill him; but, after a painful mental struggle, he said to the missionary, "I will go; pray for me." He went. The mother asked him if he was still determined to be a Christian. "Mother," he said, fully expecting some sudden assault, "*I am.*" "Then," said she, "if you will not change your mind, I shall change mine. You may be a Christian, and you may live at home." Overwhelmed with joy, Wong fell on his knees and thanked God; and a few Sundays after he was publicly baptized by the name of Kiu-taik, "seeker of virtue." This was in 1857; and he was twenty-three years of age.

For some months Wong Kiu-taik continued his occupation as a painter, but eventually he was taken into the service of the American Mission, and laboured for three or four years zealously as an evangelist. A dispute about the right term to use in the Chinese tongue for "God" caused a division among the missionaries, and a word which Kiu-taik could not conscientiously use (and which has since been almost universally discarded) was, for a time, imposed on all the agents. He resigned his post, and shortly afterwards joined the C.M.S. Mission with the entire approval and strong recommendation of his late superiors. In 1862 he became catechist, and in 1868, as we have said, he was admitted to holy orders, the

* See *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, February, 1869.



THE REV. WONG KIU-TAIK, OF FUH-CHOW, AND HIS WIFE LYDIA.

American missionaries themselves being present on the occasion, and expressing their hearty pleasure at seeing their former helper admitted to the ministry of the Church of England. Bishop Alford wrote on the occasion :—

He is a well-informed and educated man. His reading is clear and impressive; his preaching, both in matter and manner, is excellent; and the diocesan register contains his "Declaration of Assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion" written beautifully in Chinese character by himself. In appearance he is somewhat slight, self-possessed and polished in address, with a calm eye and pleasing countenance—a Chinese gentleman whom no European clergyman need be ashamed to acknowledge as a brother.

The ordination charge was given by myself. It was given by me in English, and rendered into Chinese by Mr. Wolfe, and listened to by Kiu-taik, and both English and Chinese, with great attention. The service was, of course, conducted in Chinese; the ordination questions by myself in English, being put to the candidate by Mr. Wolfe in Chinese, and his replies in Chinese were rendered to me in English by Mr. Cribb. Thus all parties present, English and Chinese, thoroughly understood and joined in the whole service. After ordination, Wong Kiu-taik read the Gospel and administered the cup to his country people in the Lord's Supper.

The greatest interest was taken by all present—some of whom were missionaries of other societies than our own—in the ordination of this Native clergyman, who, not only within our own church, but among the missionaries and converts of other Christian bodies also, and among the heathen around as well as the Native flock to whom he is to minister, bears a most irreproachable character, and to whom they testify their respect and best wishes.

During the next two years, the work extended rapidly at the out-stations; but Fuh-Chow seemed less and less willing to receive the message of salvation. There was little open opposition; the public services were still largely attended by heathen—South Street chapel, where Wong Kiu-taik mostly preached, being especially thronged; and particular mention is made of large sales of Scriptures in 1870, "upwards of two

thousand copies of portions of the Word of God being *sold* in the city and suburbs." But few, indeed, came forward to confess Christ boldly; and from that time to this the city work has given our brethren the least encouragement of any part of the Mission. It must, however, be remembered that the city preaching was not without its influence in the province. In several cases men from distant towns and villages heard the Gospel at Fuh-Chow, believed it, and carried it with them to their homes, there to spring up in the hearts of their friends and neighbours, and to be revealed after a time by a message to the missionaries asking for a teacher.

In 1869, a third missionary arrived, the Rev. J. E. Mahood; but the Mission was not to have the benefit of three labourers all at once, and before Mr. Mahood could preach in Chinese, Mr. Wolfe's health compelled him to return to England for a while. In the meanwhile, trials from both within and without beset the work. At Ming-ang-teng and Lo-Nguong, the conduct of some who had entered the Church gave the missionaries much sorrow and anxiety; difficulties arose in connection with the purchase of land or the renting of buildings at one or two stations near the mouth of the Min; and a violent outbreak occurred at Lo-Nguong in 1869, the Mission church and the house of a leading Christian being attacked and much damaged and the converts subjected to severe persecution; all which we shall relate more fully in subsequent chapters.

Out of evil, however, God brought good. The vine, pruned by the sharp knife of persecution, and with the unfruitful and withered branches cut away by excommunication, shot forth its boughs and yielded its grapes plentifully. And when, in April, 1871, Bishop Alford paid a second visit to the Mission, he was able to write most encouragingly of what he saw. Mr. Wolfe was in England at the time, but the Bishop, accompanied by Mr. Cribb, made another long circuit, travelling for

nine days from station to station, not only confirming seventy-four more converts, but everywhere "reproving, rebuking, exhorting, with all long-suffering and doctrine." It was the season of Passion Week and Easter, and he spent Good Friday at Lo-Nguong and Easter Day at Sang-Iong.* After all the defection and the severe discipline, the Bishop was able to report more than three hundred members of the Fuh-Kien Church, besides above fifty apparently sincere inquirers; and it is clear, on a comparison of the figures in successive returns, that this was taking the very lowest estimate. In a few short years, what had God wrought!

The Mission now started on a new period of development and expansion. But the mysterious providence which has so strangely marked its history from the first is again seen at this juncture. Immediately after Bishop Alford's visit, Mr. Cribb's weakened health necessitated his immediate return to England; and Mr. Mahood, with only two years' experience of China, was left in sole charge of the Mission. He was, however, efficiently aided by the Rev. Wong Kiu-taik, who had received priest's orders during the Bishop's stay; the onward progress of the Gospel by the agency of the Native helpers never stopped for a single moment; and the period of a year and eight months that elapsed between the departure of Mr. Cribb, in April, 1871, and the return of Mr. Wolfe, in December, 1872, was one of distinct progress in almost every part of the field. More than 150 baptisms were registered in the interval; the total number of adherents of the Church, including candidates for baptism, rose from 360 to 800; and that of the communicants—the best index of spiritual life—from 150 to 280. These, however, were not all new converts. Many who had fallen away in the Lo-Nguong district, and

* Extracts from Bishop Alford's own narrative of this journey will be found at pages 123, 166, 229.

some who had been excluded from Church privileges, returned in penitence, and were received back into fellowship.

The same period was signalised by perhaps the most serious of all the bursts of furious opposition that have marked the history of the Fuh-Chow Mission—that known as the *Shan-sin-fan* plot, which was a deeply-laid scheme for destroying all missionary work in the south of China. In July, 1871, small powders, called *shan-sin-fan* (genii powders), were quietly distributed all over the southern provinces, the distributors declaring that they would prevent calamity and disease, and they were eagerly sought after by multitudes of people. Suddenly some thousands of inflammatory placards appeared, and were scattered in every direction, warning the people that the powder was "a subtle poison issued with sly venom by the foreign devils," that within twenty days of taking it they would be attacked with a dire disease which only the "foreign devils" could cure, and that cures would only be effected on condition that the victims became Christians, and practised the most infamous vices. These placards produced intense excitement. In several places the infuriated people rose against the converts, beat them, and pulled down their houses; the Mission chapels were destroyed at Ku-Cheng, Ang-Iong, Sang-Iong, and Sek-paik-tu, and for a time it was scarcely safe for an Englishman to be seen in the streets at Fuh-Chow. When the excitement had a little subsided, Mr. Mahood paid a visit to Ku-Cheng and Ang-Iong, to comfort the persecuted Christians; but the journey proved a most perilous one, and he narrowly escaped death.* A few months later, he again visited the same stations without molestation. He exhorted the converts to patience and gentleness, and by way of setting them an example of a forgiving spirit, himself called upon

* See the narrative of this journey at page 202.

the very men at Ang-Iong who had led the riot, and took a cup of tea with them.

Under this persecution, the converts gave unmistakable evidence of the grace of God that was in them. At Ang-Iong the Christians were driven from their homes, and robbed of clothes, money, and property, yet not one denied the faith. Similar outrages were committed upon them at other places. The general result of the outbreak, indeed, was not wholly evil. Some inquirers were frightened away, but true religion was tested and strengthened by the fiery trial; and when the people saw how false the placards proved to be, they became more eager than ever to hear the Gospel. So it is always. Has there ever fallen a calamity upon the Church, concerning which we could not say, with Nehemiah of old, "Howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing"?

Church of the living God,
Pursue thy upward road;
Look not behind nor stray
From the well-trodden way.
Be not ashamed to bear
Thy cross on earth, nor fear
Reproach and poverty
For Him who died for thee.
With girded loins press on,
Till the reward is won.

Bonar.

CHAPTER V.

FUH-CHOW.—THE LAST FOUR YEARS.

The Lord hath been mindful of us: He will bless us.—*Ps.* cxv. 12.

His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness.—*Lam.* iii. 22, 23.

Lord of the harvest, all is Thine:
The rains that fall, the suns that shine,
The seed once hidden in the ground,
The skill that makes our fruits abound:
New every year
Thy gifts appear;
New praises from our lips shall sound.

J. H. Gurney.

IN December, 1872, Mr. Wolfe arrived back again at Fuh-Chow, after his absence of two years and a half. A few weeks later, viz., in February, 1873, he made a complete tour round the whole of the district, visiting all the stations, and travelling 338 miles. At one or two places the work appeared to have stood still, and even to have gone back; but at the great majority of the stations both the past progress and the future prospects encouraged him greatly. "On the whole," he writes, "I have been cheered by the condition of the Lord's work throughout the country, and the future prospects are decidedly more encouraging than ever they have been." Notwithstanding the "many adversaries," he found that wherever a Mission had once been fairly established, and its objects rightly under-

stood, there the people generally were decidedly friendly. It is a confirmation of the concluding remarks in our last chapter, that the persecutions of the previous few years had proved to be a real advantage to the work. Not only were they a test of the faith and sincerity of the Christians, but, as Mr. Wolfe observes, they "showed the heathen that *there is a religion for which men are prepared to suffer.*" The whole narrative of the journey is extremely interesting; but instead of presenting it here in a continuous form, we shall give all the more important portions under the heads of the various stations visited, together with copious extracts from a not less graphic narrative, written by the Rev. A. B. Hutchinson, of Hong-Kong, of a tour through the district which he took in company with Mr. Wolfe in the following year, 1874. Mr. Hutchinson, in forwarding his journal to the Committee, wrote in these most significant words: "I had been very sceptical in days gone by as to the nature of the work in the Fuh-Kien province. I went with a simple desire to know the truth of the matter, and to judge for myself; and never was I more surprised in my life. Both in nature and in grace, of the wonders to be seen, not the half had been told me."

Mr. Wolfe's return to the Mission enabled him and Mr. Mahood once more to divide the district between them. But, not content with the ground already occupied, they at once took steps to advance yet further into the regions beyond. In 1874, Mr. Mahood undertook a journey across country northward to Wan-chow, a great city actually beyond the limits of the Fuh-Kien province, and within those of Cheh-kiang. (This is one of the ports newly opened to foreign trade in 1875.) But, alas! this journey was the last he was to take in the service of the Mission. The season unfortunately had advanced to a time when no Englishman can safely travel in China; and on the way back Mr. Mahood received a sun-

stroke, from the effects of which he never recovered. He rallied for a while and strove to go on with his work; but at the beginning of 1875 he was peremptorily ordered home by the doctors, and died on the voyage. He was yet quite a young missionary; he had not been six years in the field; but God had worked not a few miracles of grace by his instrumentality, and his name will always have an honourable place in the annals of our missions in China. Another young labourer, the Rev. J. H. Sedgwick, who arrived at the end of 1874 (but who has since been moved to Hong-Kong), thus wrote respecting Mr. Mahood, on receiving the news of his death :—

Perhaps it were impossible for any one to be more loved than Mr. Mahood was by the Chinese. My teacher told me, just after Mr. Mahood left us, that Chinamen in many parts of the city greatly respected him, and every one had a good word for him, as he always had for every one. No one hears of his death without the manifestation of the deepest regret, and a kindly commiseration for Mrs. Mahood, and for her children, born in China and speaking the language as well as natives. The students at Mr. Wolfe's sang, on the evening they were told of Mr. Mahood's death, even during Mr. Wolfe's absence, the hymn, "For ever with the Lord," thus manifesting not only their realisation of what death was to him, but also their own faith. One of the merchants here, too, on hearing of his death, remarked, "Ah! yes; he was a good man; he once spent about an hour in speaking to me on religious matters"; and, instead of cherishing thoughts of enmity towards him for what too many regard as an unwarrantable interference with matters of no business of his, he cherished a kindly feeling towards him, and we may well believe that this was the kind of influence for good which he always carried with him.

Once more the Fuh-Chow Mission was in the hands of a single missionary. Nothing could have more completely justified the policy that had been pursued, of making full and fearless use of Native agents, than this failure, again and again, of the attempt to supply the Mission with an adequate European staff. At the same time nothing could more emphatically demonstrate the importance of these Native agents

being well trained, than the inevitable absence of constant European supervision, and the serious responsibilities consequently thrown upon them. With a view to the instruction of these agents, a students' class has, from the time of the rapid extension of the Mission in the country districts, been a prominent feature in the work undertaken by the Missionaries in the capital, and carried on in the intervals of their itinerating tours. This class has been of inestimable value; it has sent forth many earnest and well-instructed catechists, and now also four tried men for the sacred ministry; but how much more efficient it might have been if one missionary all along could have been specially set apart for such a work, we can readily imagine. During the last three or four years, from fifteen to twenty-five students have generally been under instruction. Besides regular studies, they have been engaged in itinerant preaching twice a week among the numerous villages in the Fuh-Chow valley. At the end of 1874, Mr. Wolfe was able to write: "Considering the little time that I have been able to give to the direct teaching of them, satisfactory progress has been made by most of them. By all, I trust, a spirit of true piety and earnestness has been manifested." But in his Report for 1875, he had to lament having been compelled to dismiss two for repeated infractions of discipline, and, still more, that one who had been sent out to take charge of a station had disgraced himself, had been excommunicated, and then, in a fit of remorse, had (it was supposed) committed suicide. "This," writes Mr. Wolfe, "has been a sad dispensation to us all, and has called forth a good deal of feeling of the right kind, and searchings of heart among all the catechists and students. But we must not be discouraged by the failings of a few. Never have I witnessed more real zeal, or a more hearty interest in the great work, than has been manifested by the great body of catechists this year."

The Fuh-Chow Mission has an excellent custom of holding, in the autumn of each year, a Conference of all the Native helpers, catechists, teachers, and students. "I allow the Conference," says Mr. Wolfe, "to discuss every question, and decide money affairs, the appointing or changing of catechists, and in fact everything that throws the responsibility on themselves; and you would be delighted to see the interest they take in the whole matter." The accounts of the meetings of 1874 and 1875 are very interesting. Of the former Mr. Wolfe writes:—

We have just held an annual meeting, or conference, of all the catechists and teachers. We had seven days' prayer and conference together; the several subjects for discussion were freely and boldly treated by our Native brethren, and many most important ideas put forth, and plans for the more effectual prosecution of our work among the masses propounded, which would have done credit to a clerical meeting at home. The subject of self-support was heartily taken up, and acknowledged by all to be a paramount duty. We may now say that a system of self-support is established throughout the churches, which is a most important step gained. The result of last year's subscriptions has not come up to my expectations, as a whole, but in some of our little congregations, I am bound to say, the efforts in this direction fully satisfied my expectations. It was decided that, for the year 1875, four of the catechists now employed should be entirely supported by the funds already collected from the Native Church. The catechists thus supported are Tang, at Lo-Nguong; Su, at Ku-Cheng; Chai, at Lang Kau; Ling, at Sang-po-Chai. The entire sum for their support amounts to 300 dollars (£70). Not more than half this sum, however, has been subscribed by the Native Church during the past year; but I fully hope that, during the coming year (1875), *more* than the entire sum will be collected, and that for 1875 there will be a fund sufficient to support six or seven catechists instead of four. At this Conference it was also agreed that the cruel national custom of binding and crippling the feet of female children is contrary to the spirit of Christianity and true humanity, and to be discouraged in every possible way by the members of the Native Church.

And of that at the end of 1875:—

The Annual Conference took place on December 12th. Bishop Burdon

opened the Conference. The Rev. Wong Kiu-taik, on his own behalf, and on the behalf of the assembled catechists and students—sixty in number—presented an address of welcome to the Bishop, which he read in the Court dialect. The Bishop then delivered an address to them in Mandarin, which was interpreted to the Conference by Wong Kiu-taik. The general business of the meeting then commenced, and continued for eight successive days. It was a deeply interesting season throughout. The papers on the various subjects for consideration and discussion by the Conference, which were read by the Rev. Wong Kiu-taik and the leading catechists, were really very able and interesting.

I was deeply impressed with the last meeting of the Conference. We all prayed for a blessing, and as we were praying we all felt an indescribable impulse, which broke forth into deep moans, and then in the loud wail of a hundred praying souls. It was a wail, an agonising cry to God for mercy upon the heathen and upon ourselves. It was overpowering; the ladies had to leave the room. I was dumb when we all got up from our knees. The tears flowed, and speech came. I never had anything like this. I felt such a real presence of God. The result was that one member came forward and put down his name for 215 dolls., another for 100 dolls., and several for 10 dolls., 2 dolls., and 1 doll., and at this prayer-meeting we collected from the Chinese about 400 dolls., or nearly £100. Now let your prayer-meetings at home result in the same fruits, and the C.M.S. and all other good causes shall not want means.

One resolution passed at this latter meeting is significant of the patient zeal of these Chinese brethren. The spheres of labour of most of them lie in the out-stations, where the most bountiful harvest of souls has been reaped; and the city of Fuh-Chow itself "still shows not the slightest interest in the message of salvation." Yet the Conference determined on opening five new preaching chapels in different parts of the city, in order to "begin a fresh crusade upon the stolid indifference of the people."

This "stolid indifference," it may be observed, is not inconsistent, in China more than anywhere else, with a certain appreciation of the missionary's work; and an illustration of this occurs in a letter written in the same year, 1875. Mr.

Wolfe was preaching at Nang-Sang, a town near Iong-Ping, not previously visited. Great opposition was manifested, and no reasoning would quiet the crowd. Two or three men from Fuh-Chow chanced to be present; and, stepping forward, they proceeded to address the people, telling them that they knew the "Sing-sang" well, that he was a very respectable man, and that his doctrines were well known at the capital, and publicly preached in large buildings there. And this was not the only service they rendered. A meeting was held in the ancestral hall to organise an opposition to the foreigners being allowed to hire a house in the town and leave a resident catechist there. The Fuh-Chow men attended the meeting, and so convincingly vindicated the motives of the missionaries that the tide of public opinion was reversed, and a resolution was passed that, the doctrine being good, residence be permitted. Meeting Mr. Wolfe next morning as he was leaving the town, these heathen allies remarked to him, "how stupid and ignorant these Nang-Sang men must be not to have heard of Christianity before, and when they did hear it, to put it away so unreasonably."

Of such men we should be tempted to say that they were "not far from the kingdom of God," did we not know by sad experience even in Christian lands what a gulf may separate mere patronage of the Gospel from a personal acceptance of its claims.

While the capital has been barren, the villages that stud the surrounding plain have borne some little fruit. One case is given in Mr. Wolfe's Report for 1875:—

In the little chapel of Sing-Taing, not far from the city of Fuh-Chow, where seven precious souls have been brought to Christ during the year through the instrumentality of one of the Christians at that place—a circumstance in connection with one of them may interest you, as illustrating the power of the truth over the money-loving desires so natural

and characteristic of the Chinese. The man in question was brought to the chapel where he heard the truth, in which he became deeply interested, and very soon declared himself a Christian. About this time his eldest brother, who is a small mandarin in the province of Ching-Kiang, returned to the home of his fathers with the intention of distributing a large sum of money among the members of his family. The family are poor. The sum to be distributed to each of his two brothers—one of whom is the Christian above referred to—was 2,000 dollars, a large and tempting sum to a poor Chinaman. The mandarin soon discovered that his younger brother had joined the hated Christians. This made him furious, and he at once demanded that his younger brother should return to the faith of his ancestors. The Christian refused to give up Christ. The mandarin now threatened to cut him off from any share in the dollars unless he renounced Christianity. The Christian brother calmly told him that, though he was very sorry at the displeasure of his highly-exalted brother, Christ was dearer to him than all; that the 2,000 dollars would be a curse to him if he took them with the alternative of rejecting Christ. He further told his brother that as, in all probability, the sum of money about to be distributed by him to his relations was the fruit of oppression and wrong to many a poor man in the district which he governed, it could bring no blessing with it to those who received it. This made the exalted brother still more angry; but may we not hope that, upon reflection, this mandarin may see that his younger brother had gained a prize more precious than money, and that this circumstance may be the means of leading him to inquire into the truth? He has been earnestly prayed for both by ourselves and the native Christians, and we have learned the mighty power of prayer.

Another incident in a recent letter is too interesting to be omitted, though, as the name of the village is not given, we do not know whether this is the right place to insert it :—

At one place I have been invited to perform the interesting but novel ceremony of expelling the devil (*i.e.*, the idols) from the place. We formed quite a procession. Several Christians in front led the way to the house of one of the inquirers. An old man came forward and at once brought the idols down from the place which they had occupied for many a year; with their incense pots, sticks, &c., &c., into the large courtyard, and asked me to expel them. I asked the people to take

them to the river close by, and after a short sermon on the folly and sin of idolatry, I smashed the pots and idols, &c., on the rock, and threw the fragments into the water, and they were soon carried away by the rapid current amidst the apparent exultation of the crowd of bystanders. Many of the villagers looked on rather interested, and I could not help but feel that idolatry had received a severe blow in this village.

The years 1875 and 1876 have been marked by renewed and general persecution almost throughout the province. Full particulars have not been received; but some of the more alarming outbreaks will be referred to hereafter under the heads of the different stations, particularly the barbarous treatment of the native evangelists at Kiong-Ning, and the murder of one of the converts at Ni-Tu in the Ning-Taik district.

The last important event of which we have any account is the visitation of the Mission by Bishop Burdon of Victoria (Hong Kong). He was twenty-two days travelling from station to station. At different places he confirmed 515 candidates; 620 of the converts partook with him of the Holy Communion; and during his visit 176 persons were baptized, 146 of whom were adults. He reports a total of 1,443 *adult* Native Christians, with a staff of 52 paid catechists, 80 voluntary helpers, 17 students, and 5 Native clergy. But that which will render this episcopal visit especially memorable in the annals of the Fuh-Chow Mission was the ordination on Easter Day, 1876, of four of these five tried and faithful men, all with several years' experience of evangelistic work, and now to become the settled pastors of congregations of their countrymen. Mr. Wolfe sends the following account of the ordination:—

The examination of the candidates occupied the whole of Passion week, and the ordination took place on Easter Sunday in the Mission Church in the city. The written examination consisted of thirty searching questions on the Old and New Testaments, and were well calculated to test the general knowledge of the candidates in the Word of God.

The result of the examination having satisfied the Bishop, the four candidates were invited to hear an address from him on the Saturday, and to join with him in a season of earnest prayer, preparatory to the sacred duties and solemn responsibilities about to be entered upon on the approaching Easter morning. The missionaries of the other missions labouring here were invited, and most of them attended with many of their native converts. The large Mission Church was well filled with native Christians, many of whom came in from the country to witness the ordination.

The Bishop entered the church a little after 10 A.M., and proceeded to the vestry, where Mrs. Burdon presented each of the candidates with a new surplice and stole. They now, "decently habited" in surplice and stole, took their places immediately in front of the communion rails. The service commenced by the whole congregation singing the "Old Hundredth"; I read the Morning Prayer; after which, the Rev. Wong Kiu-taik preached the Ordination Sermon, taking as his text 2 Cor. v. 20, 21. It was a good faithful sermon, setting forth the duties and responsibilities of an ambassador of Christ, and fraught with earnest appeals and special exhortations to the four brethren then about to be ordained. After the sermon the candidates were presented in due order to the Bishop by myself, and the Rev. Wong having read the Litany, they were solemnly set apart to the sacred ministry of the Gospel. The large congregation seemed deeply interested, and I am sure earnest prayer ascended to God for a blessing upon the four brethren who had taken upon themselves so solemn a responsibility. Many of the Christians of the sister Missions stayed and joined with us in commemorating the Saviour's death around the Table of the Lord.

On the afternoon of the same day, and in the same place, the Bishop held a Confirmation Service. Each of the newly-ordained men took part in the evening service, and as the five native clergy stood around the Bishop in the chancel, my heart bounded with joy to a degree which few probably will understand or appreciate. It really looked as if the Gospel was taking root in Fuh-Chow, and the Church being established on sure foundations in this place. These four men have been now licensed by the Bishop: the first to Fuh-Chow, the second to the interesting church and congregation at Lo-Nguong, the third to the Fu city Hok-Ning, and the fourth to the church in the city of Ku-Cheng.

For eight years Wong Kiu-taik was the only Chinese

clergyman of the Church of England in Fuh-Kien; and the advantage to the growing Christian community of having five ordained men can scarcely be over-estimated. The names of the four, as given by Bishop Burdon in the "mandarin" or Court dialect, which differs from that of Fuh-Kien, are—Chan Sin-ki, Chang Yao-kang, Soo Tsan-yang, and Lin Shan-chang. The first-named, Chan Sin-ki, is a Ming-ang-teng convert, baptized in 1867. Like Kiu-taik, he was originally an artist, and, though not in Chinese parlance à "literary man," is fairly educated. His were the best answers to the Bishop's questions, and he was appointed accordingly to read the Gospel at the ordination. He is thirty years of age. Chang Yao-kang, who is frequently referred to in the following pages as "Tang" (his name in the local dialect), is older, being fifty-two. He first heard the Gospel from Mr. Fearnley in the early days of the Mission, but was baptized in 1857 by the Americans, from whom he came to Mr. Wolfe. It was he who was so barbarously treated at Kiong-Ning in 1876 (*see* page 251). Bishop Burdon says of him, "His qualifications for the ministry were his clear appreciation of the Gospel, his life, which competent testimony declared to be consistent, and the persecutions he had faithfully endured for the Master's sake." Soo, or Su, aged forty, was a convert of Mr. Cribb's at Ku-Cheng, and one of the opium smokers referred to at page 198. Lin, aged forty-three, was baptized by Mr. Mahood. Both the latter were originally teachers.

We can wish for all four of them nothing better than that they may be as faithful and as consistent as their senior brother in the ministry has proved himself—"replenished with the truth of God's holy doctrine, and endued with innocency of life," so that "when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, they may receive a crown of glory which fadeth not

away." We doubt not they have all entered the sacred ministry in the spirit of the verses subjoined. Will not each reader join, on their behalf, in the prayer these lines embody?

We know Thee, blessed Saviour, who hast filled us with good things;
Thou hast arisen on our land with healing in Thy wings,
Thou hast arisen on our hearts with light and life divine;
Now bid us be Thy messengers, bid us "arise and shine!"

F. R. Havergal.

Lord, speak to me, that I my speak
In living echoes of Thy tone
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone.

O lead me, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wavering feet;
O feed me, Lord, that I may feed
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet.

O strengthen me, that while I stand
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea.

O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

O give Thine own sweet rest to me,
That I may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour.

O fill me with Thy fulness, Lord,
Until my very heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.

O use me, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where,
Until Thy Blessèd Face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.

F. R. Havergal.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROVINCE OF FUH-KIEN.

A good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills.—*Deut.* viii. 7.

A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.—*Job* x. 22.

Having no hope, and without God in the world.—*Eph.* ii. 12.

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them.—*St. Matt.* ix. 36.

Come, Lord, and wipe away
The curse, the sin, the stain;
And make this blighted world of ours
Thine own fair world again.
Come, then, Lord Jesu, come!

Bonar.

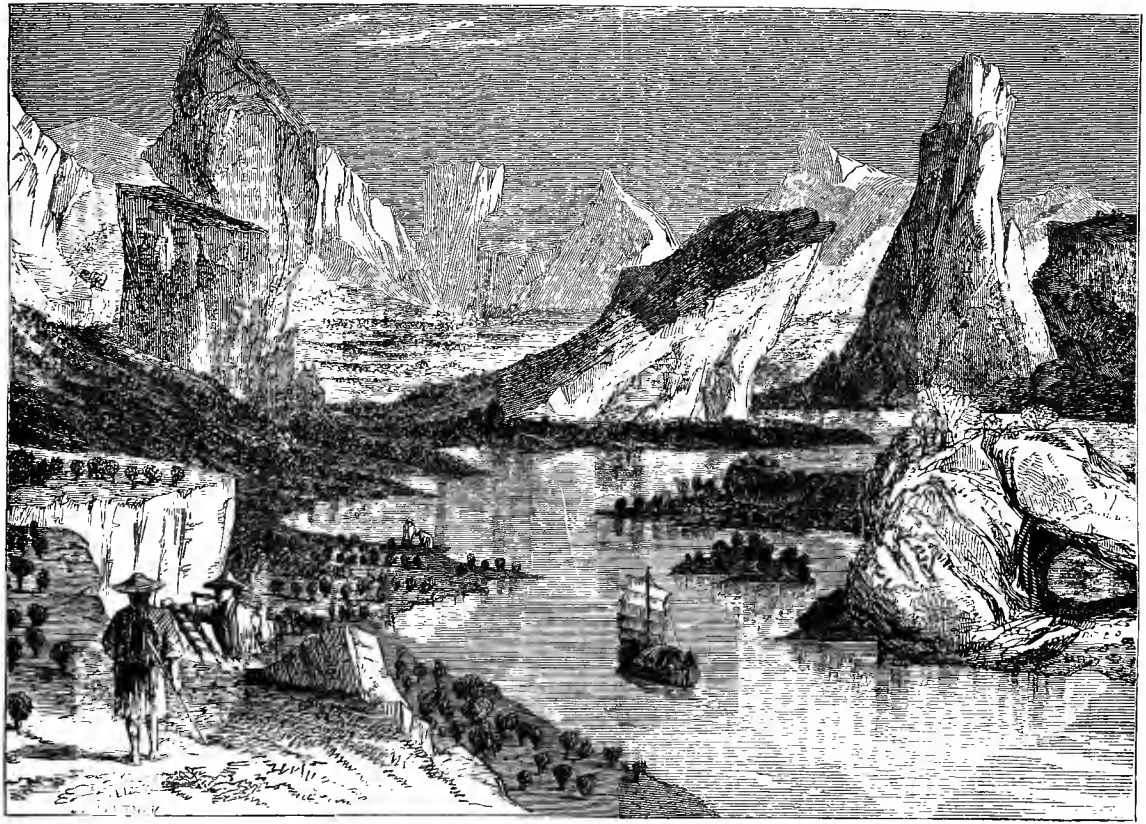
HITHERTO our attention has been confined—as the Mission itself was for fourteen years—to the city of Fuh-Chow. But during the last ten years, as we have already intimated, the most signal triumphs of the Gospel have been won in other cities and villages of the Fuh-Kien province. Our survey, therefore, must now take a wider range.

The province of Fuh-Kien, which is one of the smallest of the eighteen into which China is divided, is in area larger than Ireland, and contains an estimated population three times greater—about fifteen millions. The river Min, on which the capital stands, divides it into two unequal parts.

The smaller half, to the north, is the district occupied by the C.M.S. On the south side of the Min, the American Methodists and Congregationalists are at work; and further south, around Amoy, there are stations belonging to other English and American societies.

The scenery of Fuh-Kien is magnificent. The mountains that divide it from the more inland provinces rise to a height of 6,000 to 8,000 feet, and throw out spurs which stretch away in broken ridges across the country, and at last jut out into the sea in bold promontories, with countless rocky islands standing like outposts all along the coast. Gorges of extreme beauty break the outlines of these ridges, and down them rush the mountain streams that fertilise the valleys dividing ridge from ridge. Paddy or rice fields occupy all the soft marshy land in the hollows; acres of sweet potato cover the first rising ground; the tea-shrub, planted in terraces, is dotted over the hill-sides, like the vine of southern Europe; while the tobacco-plant, the sugar-cane, and various cereals and vegetables, are marked by the traveller as he pursues his continually ascending or descending course. Of one district Mr. Wolfe wrote in 1865: "Every available spot is under cultivation. Frequently the sides and tops of the mountains smile with the marks of industry."

The main range of the mountains is more imposing still, and is marked by features peculiar to itself. "Strange rocks," says a traveller, "like gigantic statues of men and animals, appear to crown the heights." "The pillars of the celebrated gates or huge doors which divide the provinces of Fuh-Kien and Kiangsi have been formed by nature, and are nothing less than the everlasting hills themselves." "The whole country seems broken up into mountains and hills of all heights, with peaks of every form." These are the famous Bohea mountains, and comprise the great Black Tea district,



BOHEA HILLS, BLACK TEA DISTRICT, FUH-KIEN.

whence comes the bulk of the tea which, shipped at Fuh-Chow, supplies the English market.

The Chinese of Fuh-Kien are in character like their country, more rough and vigorous than the people of the more level provinces in the north. "Those more inland, where the ridges and peaks are highest, partake of that energetic and daring disposition which the unavoidable struggles with the difficulties and dangers of a rugged region usually impart to its inhabitants. In those nearer the coast, the qualities of the mountaineer and the mariner are combined." It is from Amoy, and other south-eastern ports of the empire, that the wonderful tide of emigration has been pouring for several years past, which is giving a large Chinese population to Australia and California, and has now become a grave difficulty in American politics. In the Chinese war of 1856-7, our naval surgeons were struck with the calm and unflinching courage with which the men of these provinces, who, as wounded prisoners, came into their hands, underwent the most painful operations. Let this courage be enlisted in the cause of Christ, and what may we not expect from it? Indeed, it has been proved already in the cruel persecutions which, as we shall see hereafter, many of the Fuh-Kien converts have endured. The country, however, presents a strange mixture of civilisation and barbarism, and the people a perplexing combination of prosperity and degradation, of industry and squalor. In one paragraph of a missionary journal we come across a sentence like this: "The people in the north of the province are physically much superior to those of the capital, and the country presents a high state of civilisation and prosperity"; and the very same paragraph concludes thus: "In every place we came to the buildings were in an extensive state of dilapidation, and a Chinese city looks to the eyes of a Western barbarian like an immense mass of

ruins, covered with an unbounded population wallowing in filth and thoroughly enjoying it."

These cities, whatever their condition, are numerous and very large. Some are of the first class, "Fu" cities as they are called, such as Fuh-Chow-*Fu* (its full name), Kiong-Ning-*Fu*, Hok-Ning-*Fu;* many others of the second class, or "Hien" cities, as Lo-Nguong, Lieng-Kong, Ning-Taik, &c.; and when we say that the population of one of these second-class cities, Lieng-Kong, has been estimated at over 250,000 (though doubtless this is an exaggeration), some idea will be gained of the sort of "district" the C.M.S. is supposed to "occupy." As for the smaller towns and villages, they are innumerable.

The first tour of inquiry through this picturesque and populous country was made by Mr. Wolfe in the year following his arrival, 1863. He penetrated as far as the city of Po-Siang, on the very border of the province, a journey of over three hundred miles, first by boat up the Min, and then on foot over the mountains. The following extract from his narrative shows the reception he met with:—

In our journey north from Fuh-Chau to Po-Siang we passed through two "Fu" cities, about fourteen large towns, and an innumerable number of villages. These latter appeared to us to contain a population varying from 800 to 3,000 each. I am afraid to conjecture the population of the towns and cities; but if one may judge from crowded streets and general appearance, it must be very great indeed.

During our journey we had opportunities of seeing much of the people. We lived, in fact we were compelled to live, like the Chinese: eat what they ate, sleep where they slept, and quietly submit to the unpleasant results of their excited curiosity. For a month we had to endure the torture of being the most popular creatures in these regions. At every village we came to the entire population turned out to see us, and generally followed us till we passed the boundaries of their hamlets. Labourers in the distant fields would leave their implements behind and run to look at us. Woodcutters on the steep cliffs would rush down and meet us in some by-path, and utter exclamations of surprise. At every

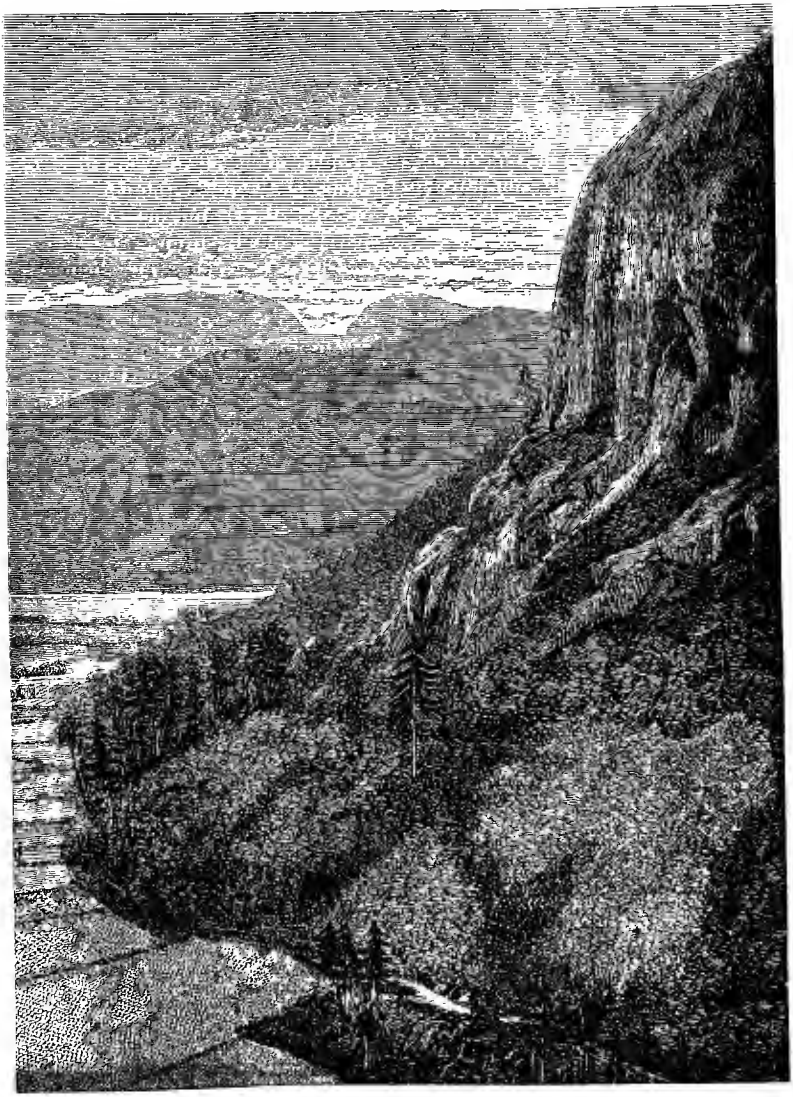
place we stopped we were surrounded by men, women, and children, with surprise marked in their countenances. The children frequently screamed, and fled at our approach, as if we were indeed "barbarian ghosts." I believe the poor innocent creatures believed we were ghosts. The people frequently called us Huang kui, *i.e.*, "foreign ghosts."

Nothing could surpass the curiosity of the natives, and their observations and remarks on our persons, &c., were equally strange and ludicrous. Our eyes and noses seemed to be the parts which struck them as most extraordinary. They ventured frequently to touch our noses, and examined very closely our eyes. Our hands and finger-nails also underwent a close examination. Our clothes were not overlooked; they were handled by thousands of fingers. There was a repetition of this every day and night wherever we came, till we became so accustomed to it that we could quietly sleep while the operation was going on. I have frequently seen my friend fall fast asleep, surrounded by hundreds of Chinese examining closely each article of his dress.

Some further passages give us vivid glimpses of the country and the people:*—

Under the shade of an olive-tree, almost twelve miles from Fuh-Chau, we sat down to rest, and partook of such refreshments as we had with us. The natives immediately crowded around us; and though this place was not much more than thirteen miles from the provincial city, the people manifested a degree of curiosity which we were not at all prepared to expect from those living so near Fuh-Chau. Men, women, and children, all alike, seemed interested in us. They looked on in silent surprise whilst we went through the necessary operation of eating our dinner; and knives and forks were objects of wonder to those who, for generations, have eaten with two sticks. When dinner was over, and the curiosity had subsided a little, I distributed a few tracts and Testaments, and spoke to them of the greatness of God, who made the heavens and the earth; of His love to this world in sending a Saviour to redeem man from sin and death, and of man's ingratitude in giving the honour and worship due to God alone to wood and stone, and other equally useless and stupid objects. They listened very attentively, and frequently uttered exclamations of surprise, that a foreign devil could speak the

* The entire narrative, from which the above are but short extracts, is printed in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* for March and April, 1866.



SCENERY ON THE RIVER MIN, FUH-KIEN.

pang ua, or "smooth flowing words of the Middle Kingdom." They also appeared to admire what I said. "His doctrines," they said, "are very good, and according to reason." I fear, however, there was more politeness and flattery than feeling in this acknowledgment.

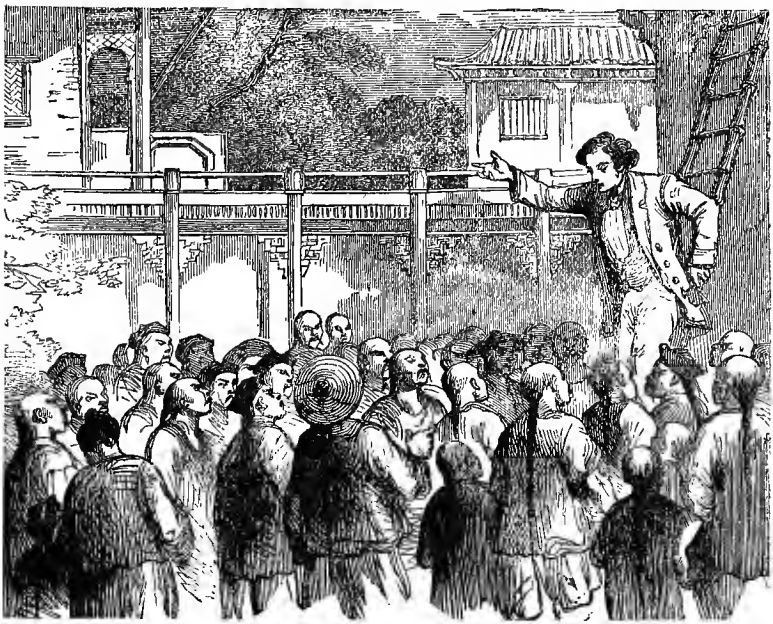
After some further rest and conversation we again started on our journey, and departed amidst the friendly "maing-maing kiangs" of the natives. "Maing-maing kiang" means, "Slowly, slowly walk," and is the usual expression of politeness in leave-taking. We walked on about two miles further, through beautiful corn-fields, our path shaded by trees the whole way, till we came to Kang-chia, a large, and, I should say, beautiful town, if that fine word can be at all applied to any of the Chinese towns. But Kang-chia certainly occupies a very beautiful position on the banks of the Min. It is surrounded by an extensive and well-cultivated plain, which is again encircled by beautifully-wooded hills. The town itself and its environs are plentifully studded with trees. This casts a charm over the place when seen from a short distance. The shade of the banyan, and the presence of the orange-tree, invite the stranger and the traveller to stop and enter. But he is soon disappointed; for the filthy lanes, and the still more filthy houses, instantly break the spell, and he longs to look away from the works of man, and even from man himself, as he figures in a dirty Chinese town, to admire and enjoy the really beautiful works of God as exhibited in the surrounding scenery.

As the afternoon was very wet, and our coolies wanted food, and ourselves something to drink, we stopped for an hour, and got tea and rested. But we were not allowed to be quiet very long. The crowd soon collected around us, and we were glad to take refuge from its curiosity in a small upper room, which the proprietor most politely placed at our disposal. In this room we found a lot of gamblers, who proved very inconvenient to us. In addition to this, the crowd soon forced its way up into our narrow room, and scarcely left us breathing space. The smell and want of fresh air made our refuge quite intolerable; so we were glad to force our way back again into the street, and take up our position under the shade of one of its beautiful trees.

While stopping here we witnessed a very gorgeous procession. It was in honour of a great idol in the town, but, though apparently very important in the view of the natives, who seemed very much interested in it, several of them left their ranks, and remained to look at us. This procession consisted of men and boys. Some were beating gongs and

drums, which made a wild and confused noise; others played a sort of fife, the incoherent notes of which the Chinese dignify with the name of music, and asked me if I considered it pleasant or harmonious. I said I could discover neither tune nor harmony in it, and that it was to my ears by no means Ho teang, *i.e.*, "pleasant to hear." At this they gave a hearty laugh, and said, "What kind of music have you at the other side?" In the centre of the procession, borne on men's shoulders, was a large boiled hog, tastefully decorated with flowers. Immediately behind the hog was borne, in like manner, a boiled goat, and, after the goat, a cooked fowl. These were all borne, the people informed us, as an offering to the idol, in order to appease his supposed wrath, which the inhabitants appeared to dread very much. I asked if the idol could eat these offerings. Some laughed, some said Yes, and others said No, and all seemed highly amused at what they considered the absurdity of the question. The rear was brought up by a number of men and boys bearing banners and flags of various shapes, sizes, and colours.

When it had passed by I endeavoured to speak to the multitude around us of the great power of God, the great and infinite Creator. One said, "Do you mean to say God had no beginning?" I said, "Yes; He had no beginning, and shall never have an end. He was neither born nor created, and He will never die. He never had a birthday." Another said, "What is his sang?" *i.e.*, "sirname." I said, "Our God has no sang, for He is not a man like all your gods, which are not really gods, but the ghosts of departed men, or the stumps of some old tree, or some mud which the workman made into the form of a man." One then asked what was the name of my God. I said, "His great and glorious name is Jehovah, which means the eternal self-existent one." "But we cannot see; how then can we believe?" I replied, "You never saw the emperor in the golden city, but you have no doubt that he exists there." They said, "Yes, but we have seen the mandarins, and who could appoint mandarins but the emperor?" I said, "True, but you have never seen the emperor. Now we can see the works of God, the heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth. Some one must have made all these, and who could make them but the great Jehovah, even the great God of whom I speak?" One immediately replied, "The earth and the heavens are self-existent." I said, "Give your evidence." He was silent: the people laughed. Another then cried out, "What does God eat?" and a number of other questions which I cannot repeat here, and to which I gave no answer, as they were



PREACHING TO CHINESE.

asked, not from a desire to learn, but to excite laughter. I continued for a few moments to tell them of Christ, of His love, of His nature, and the object of His incarnation. Some listened, others laughed, and none seemed in the least impressed. They tauntingly asked, "Who saw Jesus? what proof? what proof?" I said, "Who saw Confucius? what proof, what proof?"

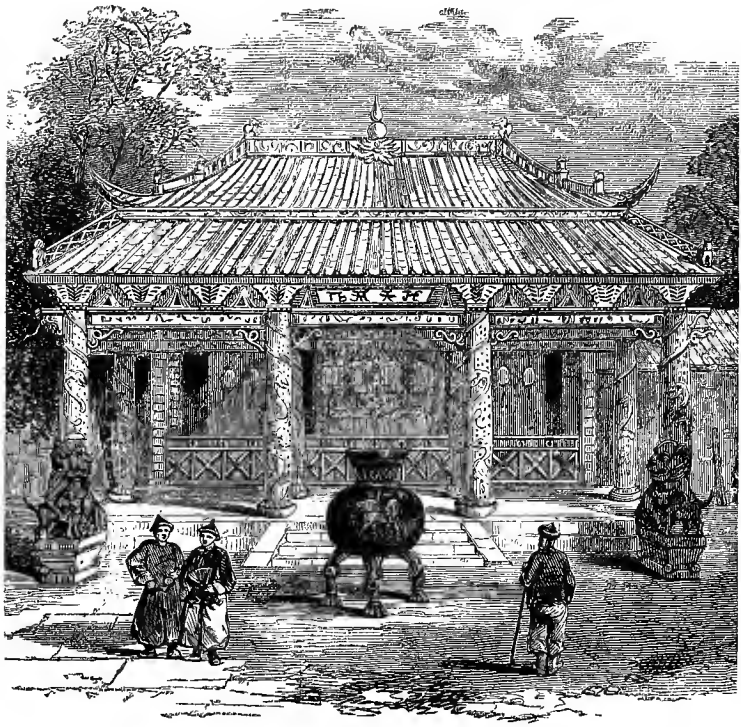
After distributing some Testaments and tracts, which were eagerly accepted, we gladly took our departure from Kang-chia, the "sugar-cane town," and "slowly, slowly walked" through a well-cultivated plain, thickly covered with crops of wheat, barley, sugar-cane, and tobacco, till we arrived at Pah Sai, or the "white-sand village." It was now about 6 P.M., and we decided to take up our quarters here for the

night. We had travelled this day about a hundred li, and so felt very tired.

We made our way to the hotel, or "pong-taing," as the natives call it, and asked for lodging for the night. We were of course followed by hundreds of the curious villagers. The price of our night's lodging, which was forty cash a man, being agreed upon, the proprietor bowed most politely, and showed us into an upper room, more properly a loft, to which we had to ascend by a rickety old ladder. This room was scarcely high enough for a man of ordinary size to stand erect. It contained six beds, two of which were occupied by two dirty-looking Chinamen. The smells which issued from the wretched place made it to us intolerable, and we decided immediately to take our departure in quest of some cleaner resting-place. The furniture in a bedroom of a Chinese hotel is extremely simple, but frequently as filthy as it is simple. It contains two or more beds according to its size, and one small rudely-made bamboo oil lamp. The beds are made of ordinary boards, raised about two feet from the floor, with an ordinary rush mat placed upon them. The Chinese sleep on these in the hot weather without any covering except their day-clothes. In the cold weather they use a warmer covering, made of cloth padded with cotton, in which they roll themselves tightly, in the form of a mummy. These night coverings are scarcely ever washed, and very seldom renewed; and they present, not unfrequently, the spectacle of a dirty heap of rags with Chinamen hiding in them from the cold. This was the appearance which the beds and bedding in the hotel at Pah Sai presented to us on the occasion of our visit.

Being informed that this was the best *puong-taing* in the place, they thought it useless to seek for a better, so made their way back to a Buddhist temple, which they had passed on their way to the village. The priest at first objected to let them in:—

After some considerable time spent in talking, and expressing his surprise at seeing two "foreign ghosts" at that late hour before the door of his monastery, he consented to let us remain for the night. He was now as loud in his expressions of happiness at seeing "foreign sing-sangs" as he was a moment ago at seeing "foreign ghosts," and made himself as active as possible in making preparations for our accommodation for the night. We were highly amused with all this, but it is just



BUDDHIST TEMPLE.

characteristic of the Chinese. No matter how repugnant a thing may be to their feelings, if once that thing is fairly established; though against their efforts and their feelings, they will tolerate it with the appearance of the greatest goodwill. And this trait in their character is a great encouragement to the missionary work among them. Once Christianity is established to any extent, though to gain that certain point it may have to struggle as for life, the Chinese will not only tolerate it, but, by

God's blessing, will embrace it too, and be the zealous propagators of its doctrines among other people.

But we must return to the temple. The priest remained up the whole night watching, lest thieves, he said, should break in and plunder us, the presence of a foreigner was such an unusual thing in the village. No doubt the expectation of getting a few hundred cash in the morning made him more active and polite, yet, independent of this, there was good-nature smiling in his countenance, which at once won one's confidence and regards. We were now both tired and hungry, and we made preparations for tea. The priest acted as valet, occasionally assisted by our own coolies. Tea being over, we spread our beds on the ground, in the midst of hundreds of idols, which were spread promiscuously around, undergoing repairs. Some of these idols were over nine feet high, and invested with beard and moustaches, which made them appear very military and ferocious. Before retiring to rest, and after reading a portion of God's Word, we sang that beautiful hymn, "Rock of Ages," and then knelt down, and on the very spot where for ages the poor deluded Chinese have knelt and adored the idol of Buddha, we worshipped Jehovah, the living and the true God, the God of our fathers. We turned our backs on the huge idol which was placed upon the altar, lest the priest and others who were present should imagine that we reverenced their idol. It was indeed sweet to realise, as we trust we then did, the presence of our God, and to transform for the time the temple of Satan into a place of prayer and praise to Jehovah. We prayed for the priest; we pleaded for the speedy fulfilment of the promises which give the heathen to Christ for his possession, and when the idols He will utterly abolish, and committed ourselves, and all whom we love, to the care and protection of our heavenly Father. The poor priest appeared lost in astonishment, and looked as if he had been fixed to the spot on which he stood during the time we were singing and praying. When these were over, I explained to him the nature of the worship in which we had been engaged, and who the great Being was whom we adored. We then lay down to sleep, with the emblems of idolatry all around us. I awoke occasionally during the night, and was saddened when I remembered how many millions of poor Chinese were given up to the worship of these senseless pieces of wood and clay around me, but gladdened at hearing from the lips of the colporteur and my coolie the words of the Gospel, which they were reading aloud to the simple-minded priest. I could not help thinking, as I listened to those words of life and salvation, that they are the destined

means to be employed in fulfilling the very promises which we had been pleading in our prayers before retiring to rest. The priest was evidently interested.

The village of Sang-tu-kau seems to have surpassed all other places in the exuberance of its curiosity :—

Tired and wearied from our long day's journey, we arrived about 7 P.M. at the village of Sang-tu-kau. The proprietor of the first pong-taing came out to meet us, and invited us very politely to condescend to lodge in his hotel. It was a miserable-looking place enough; but we were glad to avail ourselves of the first opportunity that offered to rest our wearied bodies. We discovered in the morning it was the most respectable place in the village. On entering, we found the common dining-hall filled with travellers and others, taking their evening meal. We were conducted through the body of this room into a private apartment, which was kept for special visitors, and which was once or twice honoured as the sleeping-room of a mandarin. The hotel-keeper took particular care to inform us of this. Indeed the honourable circumstance is related in large characters over the doorway, with the name of the officers who conferred the honour. Our sudden appearance in the dining-room acted like an electric shock on the inmates. Chopsticks were immediately thrown down, and instantly the house was in a high state of excitement. The villagers crowded in, and filled up every available corner. The entreaties and threats of the landlord were equally unavailing; the curiosity of the people was unconquerable. At length we decided to come out of our little pigeon-hole, and took up our position in a small room in front of the dining-hall, where we were fully exposed to public view. The rush that was made towards the spot was extraordinary, and the screams of the little children in the crowd made us fear for their safety. When the excitement abated a little, we ordered our coolies to prepare supper. The small table in this room looked so filthy, that in order to obviate the disrelish which it was likely to impart to any food placed upon it, we covered it with a copy of the *Times* newspaper, which admirably served the use of a table-cloth. This amused the villagers beyond description. Next came the plates and knives and forks. This was too much for their inquisitiveness, and several of them rushed in through the large circular open window from the dining-room, and, despite the remonstrances of our host, proceeded to examine, with their filthy hands, each article on the table. I now spoke, and said, "We are

very tired and hungry; we invite you all, small and great, to allow us to take our supper, after which you can come and look, and listen to what I shall tell you." Then there was a general exclamation and loud laugh, and many smiling faces indicated the pleasure which was felt at one of us being able to speak a little of their language. And now came a host of the most ridiculous questions. One asked how many pieces of garments we had on. Whether we were cold or warm. Another exclaimed, "How clean and white the foreign children are!" And a third expressed his admiration at the whiteness of our shirts. Then we were asked our exalted name and honourable country, and what business brought us to this their humble village. I again repeated my request to be allowed to take supper, and promised to answer all their questions after I had been refreshed with a little nourishment. At this there was again a loud and general burst of laughter, and several said, "Yes, yes, that is reasonable. Go on eat. Go on eat." We commenced to eat. The villagers looked on in surprise as we handled the knife and fork, and were content with making all sorts of remarks on the manner in which we ate; how clean our plates, &c., were; the sort of food we ate; the small quantity of rice we consumed, &c. One exclaimed that it would not take much to support one of the foreign children. Another puzzled himself with the letters on the newspaper, and gave up in despair, saying he could not make out a character of our books. They discussed among themselves the probable object of our visit. One said one thing, another contradicted it. At length they settled that we were tea-merchants, who were going to the Bohea hills to buy tea. All this time many of them were leaning with their elbows and arms on our little table.

Supper over, I prepared to answer as well as I could the most reasonable of their inquiries. When they found I was ready, questions came pouring in from all parts of the room so rapidly that it was impossible to answer any of them. "Is not your emperor a woman?" "Yes." "A woman!" "Yes, a woman." "Are there mandarin women, too?" "No." "If the emperor is a woman, why not women mandarins? That is not reason." "What is your coat made of—the price of it in your country?" "Are the women greater than the men at your side?" "Do the women marry the men, or the men the women?" "Are boys born with whiskers in England?" "What is the reason of your brother's (Mr. Fry) hair being red and your own a different colour?" When I could give them no satisfactory answer to this latter inquiry, they concluded among themselves that the difference must arise from the different

colours of our blood. Of course to half of their questions I could give no reply. One very gravely asked why we closed our eyes and repeated words before and after meals. A beautiful opportunity was thus afforded me of placing the truth before them. I told them I was a preacher of the religion of Jesus; that we were disciples of Jesus; and that we were taught by Him to thank God, the great heavenly Father, the great Lord of heaven and earth, for giving us food to eat and clothes to wear. They said, "And does the heavenly Father give rice and clothes?" I said, "Yes, He gives every blessing to His people." "How are we to get it from Him?" "By asking." "Can He hear? Where does He live? Can we see Him?" I explained to them the nature and character of God. They expressed themselves rather disappointed, and said, "We cannot see, how then can we be sure?" I endeavoured, by God's help, to lay before them the great and leading truths of Christianity, no doubt in an imperfect manner; but I am sure they understood all I said, from the attention they paid, and from the questions they asked. I gave them some books and tracts, and, as it was getting late, and we wanted to retire to bed, we requested them to leave us to ourselves and return to their homes. They seemed quite pleased, and left the little room. We retired to our bedroom, and, after prayer, lay down to sleep. We were destined, however, to be disappointed; for in the room where we took supper, and which was next our bedroom, was an idol which the villagers assembled to worship, and all night long kept up the greatest noise and commotion in paying their devotions to this piece of wood. This idol had neither shape nor figure. It was quite black from the smoke of the incense which has been offered to it; and, from what I could learn, it was a relic of great antiquity, preserved in the family of our host, and handed down from one generation to another. We observed, that as each company who came paid their devotions to this idol, they also paid their respects with particular formality to the landlord, and he, in his turn, was most careful in returning them. It was not the ordinary formal etiquette which one Chinaman shows another: it appeared to me to be in some way connected with the idol; perhaps it was an inferior sort of worship paid to the host in consequence of his being the guardian of this ancient idol. In addition to all this noise, the room in which we were was most uncomfortable. Wind and rain alike came in through the apertures in the walls and in the roof. It was filthy in addition. On the whole, our first night's experience of a Chinese hotel did not at all impress us in their favour. Our host was very civil and polite towards us, and was quite

worthy of superintending a more respectable hotel; but he was extravagant in his prices, and took the opportunity, no doubt, of imposing on the "western barbarians."

From the account of another journey, into the country south of the Min, we extract an interesting conversation respecting Confucius, which took place at the town of Teing-siong:—

As I was thus reasoning, an old man came forward and said, "Stranger, listen to the words of the old man. I will speak." I replied, "Venerable Sir, I will hear; let wisdom flow from your lips." He proceeded, "I am an old man, you are young; the grey hairs have covered my head, and my eyes are growing dim. I have read the books of our great sages, and I love to hear of true doctrine; but what can be purer than Confucius? What can be wiser than his words? If a man follows Confucius, he can obtain purity of heart." I said, "Venerable Sir, I have read the sayings of your great sage Confucius, and I have read the sayings of the great teacher Jesus, and I can tell you, that as heaven is higher than the earth, so Christ's doctrine is higher than that of Confucius. He was of earth; Christ was from heaven, and spoke heavenly doctrine. Confucius never pretended to speak of spiritual or heavenly doctrine. He was wise in this, for he was ignorant of God and of heaven. He was a great man, but there was a greater than he." I then pointed out Christ as the Saviour of the world, dwelt upon His incarnation, His life, His doctrine, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, and His present pleading for His people; and then asked, "Which of the two, Christ or Confucius, has done more for this poor, miserable, fallen world?" The old man still went on to say, that if a man followed Confucius he could not do wrong. I asked him to point out the man who ever did, and if he ever met with one, or whether he was sure that Confucius himself conformed to the letter of his own moral teaching. The old man, after a little hesitation, said he never met a man who fulfilled the moral precepts of the great sage. I now pointed out the inability of all human teaching to change the heart of man, and make it fit for the kingdom of heaven; that Christ's teaching and doctrine are not human, but heavenly; that they give life to the soul by the Holy Spirit working on the heart. The old man again spoke, and said, "Foreign teacher, you look young, but your words are wise; your doctrine is good. It is deep beyond the

understanding. Who is the Holy Spirit, and where is the kingdom of God?" I explained. The old man listened attentively, received a copy of the New Testament and some tracts, bowed politely, and took his departure. I bowed in return, and told him to "slowly, slowly walk." He went on his way, and I saw him no more.

These journeys were at once very exhilarating and very depressing. "No joy," writes Mr. Wolfe, in winding up one of his narratives, "can be greater than that of preaching Christ to those who never heard of Him before." But then, on leaving a town or village, the thought was sometimes overpowering that months and years might elapse before the people had another chance of hearing the words of life. "To the Christian traveller himself, the scene is almost overwhelming: thousands dying around him daily, ignorant of the great salvation; large cities, towns, and villages, sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, and oftentimes, with outstretched hands and necks, imploring aid which he has not the power to give. At the same time he knows that there are thousands at home able to help, but who turn a deaf ear to the cries of the heathen, and leave him alone to shed his tears where he cannot give his efforts."

What pleasure can the missionary thus borne down with the weight of his responsibility take in the loveliest scenery? In Fuh-Kien, the bounteous hand of the Creator has strewn the earth with beauties. If anywhere the natural man could look "through Nature up to Nature's God," surely it would be there. And yet, when He who made all things "very good" "looks down from heaven upon the children of men" in that province, what does He see? Nowhere are the sad words of the Psalmist more applicable—"All gone out of the way; all together become abominable; none that doeth good, no, not one!"

But our brethren have never suffered themselves to lose

heart, and they have not been without their reward. Ten years ago Mr. Wolfe wrote that he hoped before he sang his "Nunc dimittis" to hear the Chinese sing "Cantate Domino," and in that period he has heard the "new song" "sung unto the Lord" in nearly a hundred towns and villages.

To some of these towns and villages we are about to pay a visit in succeeding chapters.

All true, all faultless, all in tune,
Creation's wondrous choir
Opened in mystic unison
To last till time expire.

And still it lasts: by day and night,
With one consenting voice,
All hymn Thy glory, Lord, aright,
All worship and rejoice.

Man only mars the sweet accord,
O'erpowering with harsh din
The music of Thy works and word,
Ill matched with grief and sin.

* * * *

The rod of heaven has touched them all,
The word from heaven is spoken;
"Rise, shine, and sing, thou captive thrall,
Are not thy fetters broken?"

Keble.

Thou didst brood o'er chaos wild
Till a new creation smiled;
Evermore that work pursue
Till Thou shalt make all things new.

J. G. Flett.

CHAPTER VII.

LIENG-KONG AND TANG-IONG.

Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.—1 *Cor.* i. 26.

Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?—*James* ii. 5.

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.—*Rev.* iii. 4.

O happy ones and holy!
Lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly,
On high may dwell with Thee.

S. J. Stone.

LIENG-KONG is a large and important *hien* city, thirty miles north-east of Fuh-Chow. It stands on the River Lien, which flows through a broad and fertile valley from N.W. to S.E., parallel with the valley of the Min. Lieng-Kong is approached from Fuh-Chow either by a direct path over the mountainous country dividing the two valleys, or by sailing down the Min to a place near the mouth, called Kwang-tau, and then taking a shorter path (seven miles) over the mountains. Both routes conduct the traveller through most picturesque scenery. The former is especially fine. After leaving the northern gate, the plain, covered with populous villages and assiduously cultivated, is traversed for seven miles to the foot of the

Pehling Pass, up which the path consists of stones arranged to form irregular steps. Mounting the steep ascent for about a thousand feet, and turning round, the whole plain that has just been left is spread out before the eye, "looking like one immense richly-ornamented carpet, on which stand two millions of human beings," or, as another missionary expresses it, "like the plain of Sodom, well-watered everywhere, but the men wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Turning again, and proceeding northward, the path gradually ascends through paddy-fields and corn-fields, past tea-gardens and rest-houses, to the "Tigers' High Retreat," from whence, looking north, another extensive view is obtained of the valley of the Lien, stretching right and left for many miles. A steep descent leads down into the valley, and then, following the course of the stream eastward for a few miles, the traveller reaches Lieng-Kong. The river here is navigable for small boats, which daily convey goods and passengers to and from the villages on the banks and on the hill-sides; and, below Lieng-Kong, for large sea-going junks, which sail up to the city walls, distant from the sea several miles. "The mountains rise high on both sides of the river, and the banks are adorned with trees of various kinds, amongst which the camphor-tree, with its dark green foliage, stands out prominent."

We have already mentioned that the population of Lieng-Kong has been estimated at between 200,000 and 300,000, but that this is probably an exaggeration. The city, however, is certainly a large one, and it is the capital of an extensive and populous district. It is a place of considerable wealth, and contains large numbers of gentry and *literati*. These are the most obstructive classes in China, and Lieng-Kong has been a comparatively barren field from the first in respect of spiritual fruit, notwithstanding the most persevering efforts.

Yet Lieng-Kong has an interest of its own, in that it was



RIVER SCENE IN CHINA.

the first out-station occupied in the Fuh-Chow Mission. In September, 1864, Mr. Wolfe visited the city, and was very "courteously entreated" by a Chinese gentleman, who invited him to stay at his house :—

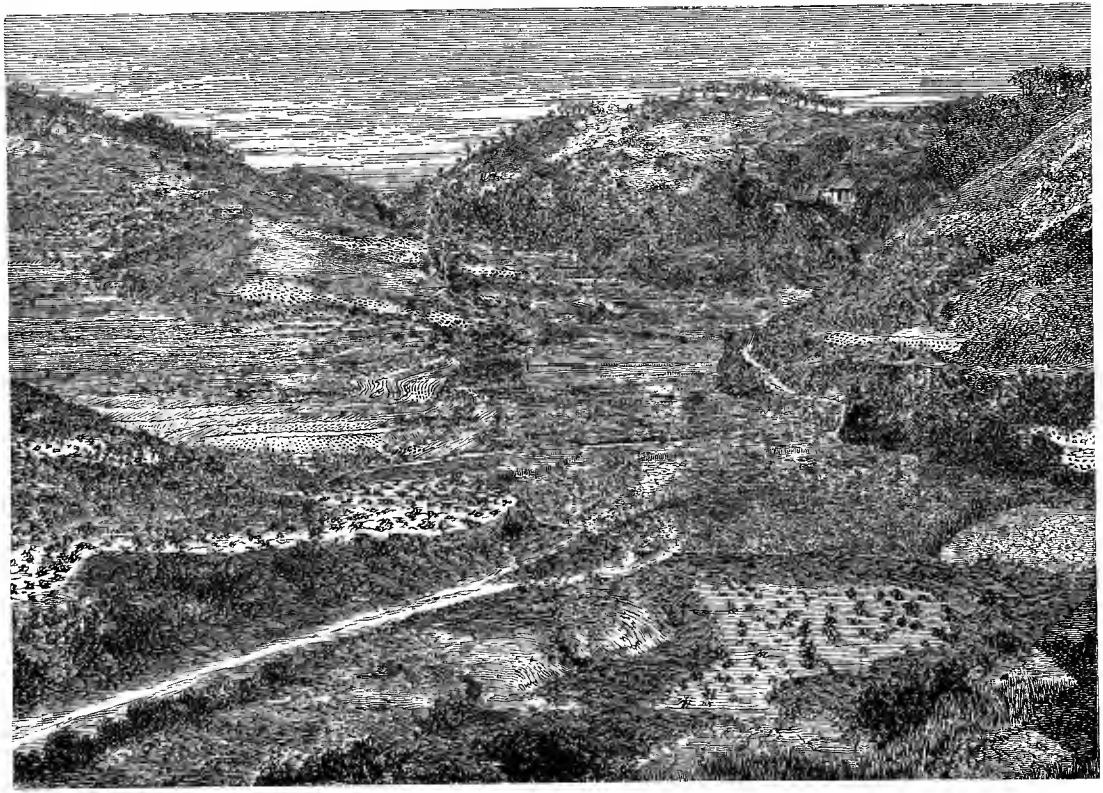
He took me about, and introduced me to his friends in the city. A great deal of this no doubt arose from his curiosity to show me to his friends, but it was indulged without the slightest rudeness on his part, or unpleasantness on mine. I did not, however, accept his kind invitation to lodge in his house, but took up my quarters in a temple hard by, where I felt more at liberty to receive all who came to me, and to distribute my books at discretion. The priests of this temple offered to let me have rooms in their monastery for preaching and teaching. My friend every morning despatched a messenger to see if I had been quite comfortable the previous night. He also invited me to dine, and asked a large party of his friends to meet me. He wished me to dine after the English fashion, but, being persuaded that he wished partly to feed the curiosity of his friends, I accepted the invitation on condition that everything was done in Chinese fashion. The dinner was a most sumptuous one. All varieties of dishes, meats and soups, known and unknown to me, covered the square table around which all sat. On the whole we enjoyed ourselves very much, and my host and his friends must have had marvellous command over their risible inclinations, as I must have powerfully excited them by my awkward use of the chop-sticks. At the close, just before dinner was over, the servant brought in a large tub of warm water for me to wash in, as my host thought that it was English fashion to wash after dinner. When I was leaving, I left a Testament and a number of tracts, which my kind friend promised to read.

A month or two later, one of the catechists named Kuong-Mi was sent to Lieng-Kong to begin the work of setting the Gospel before the people, and on his removal in the following year to break fresh ground at Lo-Nguong, another catechist, Lo Tang, succeeded him. A small room for preaching was hired, and there these Chinese brethren preached daily, and sold tracts and portions of Scripture. A difficulty, however, arose about the hiring of the room, and Mr. Cribb visited Lieng-Kong to see the chief mandarin on the matter. His

narrative, both of the journey—which illustrates what we have said of the scenery—and of his reception at the city, is interesting:—

You will, I am sure, be pleased to hear that about two months ago I visited our new Mission station at Lieng-Kong. One of our Native helpers (Sang Ngu) accompanied me. We went overland, and returned by water. The journey was a very pleasant one on the whole. The scenery was beautiful, the country being very hilly, and almost every hill was cut out in terraces for the cultivation of rice, and water was pumped to the very top. Our road lay over some hills about 1,500 or 1,600 feet high. Every few miles there was a resting-place, and as we stopped to give our chair coolies a rest, we said a few words to the poor villagers, who gathered round us in curiosity. It was seed sown indeed by the "wayside," but whether any seed fell upon good ground and shall spring up and bear fruit, the Lord only knoweth. The first night I slept at one of the inns on the hills, and experienced for once some of the hardships of missionary life as far as one's comfort is concerned. I will not tire you by describing the room I occupied, but it was something worse than the generality of rooms you meet with amongst the poor of St. Giles', or Spitalfields, or Islington. However, all the inconveniences and unpleasantnesses were fully compensated for by the pleasure which I had of seeing nearly all the villagers assemble after dark in the little courtyard, if I may so designate it, in front of my room, to hear the glad tidings of salvation. We read and prayed, and sang and preached, until it was about eleven o'clock, and then retired to rest, commending ourselves to the care of our loving Father.

We reached "Lieng-Kong" about 4 P.M. next day. As far as I can ascertain I am about the fourth or fifth foreigner who has visited this city. My presence, therefore, attracted great attention, and when we opened the doors of the preaching-house for service, every seat was quickly occupied, all being anxious to see the "foreign child." Oh that they would evince the same anxiety to hear of Jesus and Him crucified as they did to see me! Nearly all the time I was in the house the small door and window, if such it may be called (for it was only a square hole cut in the wall, with a few bars placed perpendicularly between it to keep out thieves), was thronged with the neighbours, who were anxious to get a glimpse of the foreigner. This was particularly the case at meal



TEA AND PADDY FIELDS, FUH-KIEN.

times, all wanting to see what food I partook of, and how I eat it. On the whole, they were pretty orderly. I was, however, obliged to keep a bamboo near me, to rap the knuckles of those who would climb up above the others at the window, and so keep out the little air that came into my apartment. After remaining a short time they went away, apparently as much gratified as our English children after seeing the animals fed at the Zoological Gardens. Part of my object in going to Lieng-Kong was to visit the chief mandarin, who had sent officers to our resident helper to ask the object of our renting a house in the city, and had (according to the report which reached us) said something about driving the foreigners away. My helper, who can speak the mandarin dialect, acted as interpreter. The Chinese etiquette, which was practised on this occasion, seemed to me so very absurd that I could scarcely restrain from laughing. However, according to the Chinese customs, the officer received me very politely. I first showed him my passport, and then the Native helper explained the object of my visit. He replied that I could go where I pleased while I remained at Lieng-Kong, and that with regard to our renting a house there, "he had written to the Prefect of Fuh-Chow, but had received no answer about the matter." There has been no disturbance nor any visit from officers since, so we may presume that we are to hold peaceable possession.

Before leaving the mandarin we presented him with a copy of the entire Word of God, and of the Book of Common Prayer, telling him that these books contained the doctrine which we desired to teach, and that if he studied them he would see that we taught the people to be obedient and respectful to their officers, and to be diligent in the practice of all virtues. May the Holy Spirit instruct him to read those books, and carry home the truth to his soul!

After remaining here two days I returned to Fuh-Chow, going over the hills to a village called Kuang-tau, where I took a boat and sailed up the Min with a fair wind, and arrived at the long bridge shortly after dark.

But further difficulties afterwards ensued. The gentry interfered, and induced the landlord of the hired room to give the Mission notice to quit, taking measures at the same time to prevent the letting of any other place. The one chance of maintaining a position in the city was to purchase the whole house out-and-out; but would the "head landlord," himself

one of the gentry, sell it to the foreigner? This seemed most improbable; but the wife of this man, who had become acquainted with the catechist's wife, and had heard the Gospel from her, persuaded her husband to agree to the purchase; and the premises became Mission property.

This success, it may well be supposed, did not tend to make the gentry less suspicious. They organised a system of espionage, both on the movements of the catechist and on the people who attended the preachings; and when Mr. Wolfe opened a boys' school, they came and made searching inquiries into its object, examined the books, and then complained to the police. Some excitement ensued, and a few of the boys who had been gathered together were withdrawn; but the teacher quietly persevered, and no serious harm was done.

It was not long before a few inquirers came forward, despite opposition, and at one of Mr. Wolfe's visits in 1866 he had the joy of baptizing the first two converts:—

> They had been under instruction for some considerable time, and one of them, a carpenter by trade, has endured a great deal of persecution for the truth's sake. The evening of their baptism the chapel was crowded, and many who desired to witness the ceremony could not find room in our little Bethel. I opened the service with the hymn, "Come, thou fount of every blessing," and, after a short prayer, read and expounded the third chapter of St. John's Gospel, explaining to the people the nature and necessity of the new birth. The exposition occupied about half an hour, after which I baptized the two candidates, in the presence of a large number of their fellow-countrymen. I then briefly addressed the newly-baptized on the duties and responsibilities of their new relationship as members of the body of Christ. I reminded them of the great honour which was placed upon them, in being the first called by God to bear the name of Christ in the city of Lieng-Kong, and urged them to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith they were called.

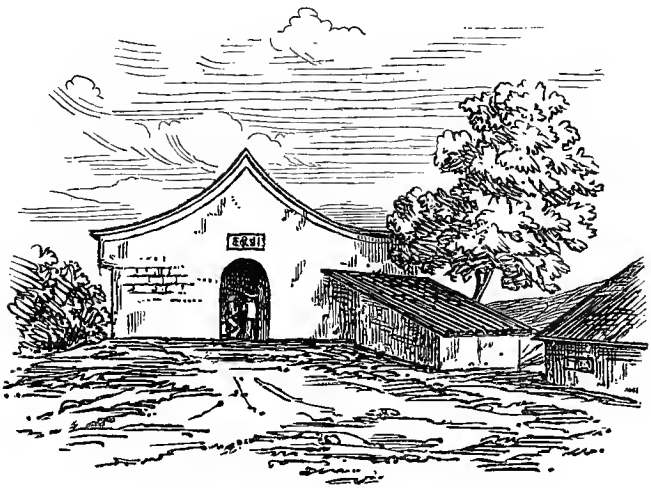
During the following year the work was carried on "in the

face of much and most persistent opposition, the enemy disputing every step." Eight persons were baptized this year, five of whom were women, the result of the zealous labours of the catechist's wife, "Mrs. Tang." One of them, a widow, who manifested much of both faith and knowledge, was severely beaten by her friends for joining the Church, and dragged roughly from the chapel, where she had taken refuge, and an attempt was made to sell her to a heathen husband.

A few more baptisms are recorded in the next two years; and in May, 1868, Bishop Alford, on his first visitation tour, confirmed four men and five women. But the work continued to be carried on with much difficulty. In the former year placards were posted over the city, imputing abominable motives to the Mission agents; whereupon the catechist issued a counter-placard, containing the Ten Commandments and a few words inviting the people to "come and see." The chief mandarin being appealed to at the same time, showed a kindly feeling towards the Mission, very rare in a Chinese official. He issued a short proclamation, forbidding the molestation of the Christians; and when one of the converts was accused to him of disturbing the peace, he said to the complainant, "You are not telling the truth; I cannot believe that the followers of Jesus are evil-disposed people."

Lieng-Kong did not, however, fulfil its early promise. Bishop Alford, on the occasion of his second tour through the province, in 1871, did not visit it; but his statistics give as baptized members 34 adults and 18 children. Nevertheless, Mr. Wolfe, on his first visit after his two years' absence in England, in February, 1873, had a sad lesson on the need of a sufficient missionary force to exercise uninterrupted pastoral care over a young mission. He found the Church entirely scattered—"some dead, others expelled, others again standing aloof." Only one of the converts remained on the spot—the

carpenter alluded to above as one of the first two baptized. "He had suffered much for the Lord Jesus in years gone by, and said he had experienced too much of His love to forsake Him now." It was a heavy trial of faith to have to begin the work again almost *de novo*. And the fruits of this fresh sowing have been but small as yet. In 1874 Mr. Wolfe reports "an



REST HOUSE, BETWEEN LIENG-KONG AND TANG-IONG.

utter want of interest"; in 1875, "not a ray of encouragement." But in 1876 he writes, "The work in Lieng-Kong has taken a fresh start; several of the old converts have returned, and three new ones have been baptized, while several others have entered themselves as inquirers."

Parallel with the Lieng-Kong valley, and separated from it

by a chain of mountains, lies the valley in which stands the town of TANG-IONG, distant fifteen miles north from Lieng-Kong city. The path up from one valley and down into the other is described as most picturesque. "Hill and dale follow each other in quick succession, adorned with trees and a profusion of flowering shrubs. The single-leaved camellia, and the tea-oil shrub, a species of the camellia, are amongst the most frequent. The dog-rose and a variety of azaleas are also plentiful. Here and there clumps of trees stand out prominently in the landscape, crowning the summit of some high hill. There they have stood for ages, and have served as landmarks to generations that have long passed away; and they are looked upon now with superstitious reverence as the source of good fortune to the neighbourhood."

Tang-Iong itself is not a very large place, but it is the market-town for the whole valley, which is thickly populated, and everywhere cultivated with all kinds of grain and vegetables. It is also of some importance as a halting-place for travellers going north or south, and Mr. Wolfe describes the inn as the best he had seen in China. The account of his first visit, in November, 1865, is worth quoting:—

We arrived at Tang-Iong a little after nightfall, and were shown to the best hotel in the place, and most certainly the best of the kind I have yet seen in China. It was quite a grand place compared with those I had hitherto seen in the course of my rambles through the province. I found the cause of this to be that Tang-Iong was the halting-place of the mandarins and petty kings of the south, on their way to Pekin to pay their respects to the "Son of Heaven." I was shown into one of the best rooms by a *waiter*. The existence of such an official in a Chinese pong-taing surprised me not a little. He had all the polite genuflections of a celestial, though as regards the cleanliness of his person, and his general appearance, he was as different as possible from his brethren in the west. The landlord amused us a great part of the night with accounts of the past glories of his hotel, when kings and princes honoured him with their presence, and rewarded him with their gold. He sighed

after those days of yore, and attributed all his misfortune to the introduction of English steamboats, which take all his ancient customers up to the north as it were on the wings of the wind. The room which the king of Liu-chu island occupied is pointed out, but its former glory is departed, if, indeed, it ever possessed any. We, in return, told him of the true Son of heaven, Jesus the Son of God, who left all His glory, and came down on earth to die for us, to redeem our souls from sin and death. The words of life were new to the old man, and he listened attentively. We left some books in the hotel.

Ten years afterwards we find the wife of one of the proprietors of this hotel thanking Mr. Wolfe for the deliverance of her husband from opium-smoking, the result of his advice given at previous visits.

It was not until the beginning of 1867 that Tang-Iong was occupied as an out-station. A room was hired, and in it a catechist daily preached and taught, finding many willing listeners. A few months later Mr. Wolfe reports that "the interest of the people in the Word of God is remarkable." "The catechist complains that he has no time to himself for private reading or improvement, from the continual flow of inquirers and learners." Several placed themselves under regular instruction, gave up idolatry, and observed the Lord's Day. In October the first baptism took place. The candidate was an old man, "one of the patriarchs of the place," and his case was a remarkable one:—

His conversion has been almost instantaneous. He appeared to have taken hold of the truth at once. Some people seem to be afraid of these sudden conversions. To me, a sudden conversion appears a more evident work of the Spirit than any other sort of conversion. When I see a dark, ignorant heathen at once receiving and manifesting an intelligent knowledge of the Gospel, the atonement and redemption through them, I am convinced that nothing else but the Spirit of God could so enlighten his previously dark heathen mind. Such a sudden change could not be effected by anything else. The old man of whom I speak has, from the first time he heard the truth, shown a degree of appreciation of

the Gospel which is very remarkable and encouraging to us. As soon as he received the truth into his own soul, he devoted his whole time and energies in making it known to others. Several, through means of his exertions, have placed themselves under instruction, and have requested Christian baptism.

This old man soon brought others to the Saviour he had found, beginning with "them of his own house." In March, 1868, two of his sons and four of his grandchildren were baptized, with another man; and in September ten other persons, all through his instrumentality, and notwithstanding that he was in a very feeble state of health. "He might be seen, staff in hand, tottering from house to house, persuading the people to come to Christ." He is described in the following year as "standing on the brink of eternity"; but he lived on, and in 1873 we still find him "looking forward with faith and hope to the end."

The story of two of the converts is very interesting:—

The husband received the truth several months ago, and told his wife of his determination to become a Christian, and at once destroyed all his household images. The wife, seeing this, became frantic with rage, and grasped a large sword-knife and attempted to stab her husband. This act of the wife enraged the husband, and he attempted to beat and injure his wife. For months peace had utterly departed from this dwelling. It was, however, only the violent raging of the demoniac when the demon was about to be cast out. The husband began to learn more of Christ, and exercised more patience; and this, combined with the visits and exhortations of the catechist's wife to the wife of the farmer, resulted, through the blessing of God, in her conversion, and brought a deep and a blessed peace to this once miserable dwelling.

Bishop Alford held confirmations at Tang-Iong in the course of both his tours in Fuh-Kien, administering the rite to five men in 1868, and to five women and three men in 1871. The service each time was performed under some difficulties. The room used as a chapel was open to a busy street, and

exposed to its noise and bustle; and the room for inquirers behind was a very small one. On the first occasion, the front room being used, the service was much interrupted by the curiosity of the passers-by; on the second, the little congregation was inconveniently squeezed into the back room. Such are the circumstances under which Episcopal functions are exercised in China.

Persecution, as elsewhere, soon arose against the converts. Within a few days of the baptismal service of September, 1868, a respectable shop-keeper, who, with his wife and four children, joined the Church on that occasion, was beaten, his shop damaged, his customers threatened, and his debtors assured that it would be a meritorious act on their part not to pay their debts to him.

The storm blew over; but from time to time opposition re-appeared in various forms, and our Lord's Word came true in Tang-Iong, "when tribulation ariseth because of the Word, by-and-by they are offended." Inquirers drew back; some of the baptized shrunk from confessing Christ; and the early promise of the station was not fulfilled. For some years the reports tell of but slow progress, and in 1874 the church books showed only twenty-six baptized and eleven inquirers. This little Christian community had, however, got together the proportion of funds required to be contributed by them before a small church could be erected. That it was wanted Mr. Hutchinson's account will show:—

The building in which we found ourselves was not very promising for Divine service, it being a primitive sort of inn, belonging to one of the Christians. The catechist resides there until a new house shall be built. A notice at the door asserted that accommodation for thousands could be found within. We naturally asked where, on seeing a small barn-like room, with cooking apparatus on one side and many benches on the other. This was the temporary church, guest-room, and kitchen all in one. Beyond, a covered shed held our chairs, and a small bedroom

behind, was the only sleeping-place available. It was now quite dark, so we dined in the shed to secure a measure of privacy, and then those candidates for baptism who had arrived were examined individually by Wolfe. Christians and heathen crowded in.

One of the candidates on this occasion, on being asked the usual question, "Dost thou renounce the devil?" &c., replied most vigorously, "I hate him."

The last item of intelligence from this station occurs in Mr. Wolfe's Report for 1875, and is very interesting:—

A few interesting converts have been baptized at Tang-Iong this year. A poor woman in a village six miles from Tang-Iong heard of Jesus from Lazarus, one of the members of this latter church. For twelve months she kept it all to herself, while Lazarus made repeated visits, and taught her more about Jesus; she then told her husband, who at first treated the matter with indifference. She now told her neighbours, and with the help of poor Lazarus, distributed Christian fly-sheets amongst them, and pasted them on her own doors and rooms. This aroused the fury of her neighbours, and her husband took their side against his wife. The poor woman was now violently persecuted, both by her husband and neighbours; but the truth had found a lodgment in her heart, and persecution had no power over her faith. She persevered through three years of opposition, and conquered it, and on the evening of the 1st of November last walked six miles to Tang-Iong Chapel, supported by her only son; and, after an interesting confession of her faith, was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ.

Thus, one by one the wandering sheep are brought into the fold. The rich and the learned may reject the Gospel; the people as a body may stand aloof; we may seem to labour in vain, and spend our strength for nought; but a few cases like this poor woman are sufficient to assure us that the grace of God is at work, and therefore to prove that, however meagre the success may seem to our impatient judgment, the Divine approval rests upon the Mission. Large successes are indeed to be sought for and prayed for. Yet it may be that

we need the partial failures too, to remind us that results are not a matter of course, and that the conversion of souls is one of God's own prerogatives. And if we are tempted to tremble for the "few poor sheep" He has gathered together at Lieng-Kong and Tang-Iong, let us be sure of this, that the Lord is mindful of His own.

He shall redeem them one by one
Where'er the world-encircling sun
Shall see them meekly kneel.

Keble.

A little band of pilgrims, one in heart,
Who seem some hidden happiness to share,
Which neither toil nor suffering can impair;
The thorny path with courage they pursue,
And still a smile of sweet contentment wear,
For at the end of that dark vale they view
A prize which well may serve their ardour to renew.

Charlotte Elliott.

Lord, we are few, but Thou art near
Nor short Thine arm, nor deaf Thine ear;
Oh, rend the heavens, come quickly down,
And make a thousand hearts Thine own.

Cowper.

CHAPTER VIII.

LO-NGUONG.—I. THE CHURCH FOUNDED.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.—*Isa.* lv. 13.

Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.—*Isa.* lxi. 3.

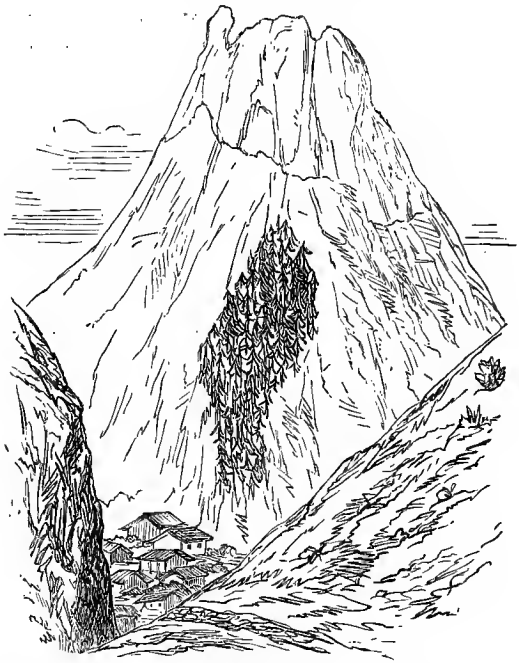
Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: let them praise the name of the Lord.—*Ps.* cxlviii. 12, 13.

Sow ye beside all waters,
Where the dew of heaven may fall;
Ye shall reap if ye be not weary,
For the Spirit breathes o'er all.
Sow ye beside all waters,
With a blessing and a prayer;
Name Him Whose hands uphold thee,
And sow ye everywhere.

Sow, though the rock repel thee,
In its cold and sterile pride;
Some clift may there be riven,
Where the little seed may hide.
Room on the narrowest ridges
The ripen'd grain will find;
That the Lord of the harvest coming
In the harvest sheaves may bind.

Anna Shipton.

SOME sixteen miles north of Tang-Iong, in a deep valley surrounded by high mountains, and close to an arm of the sea, stands the important *hîen* city of Lo-Nguong, "the fountain of the river Lo." Mr. Hutchinson thus describes the route:—"The scenery increased



PHILOSOPHER'S MOUNTAIN, AT THE HEAD OF LO-NGUONG VALLEY.

in grandeur as we advanced. The ravines below us deepened, and the mountains towering above us seemed to increase in height, until we reached, through a fortified pass, the head of the Lo-Nguong valley. Below us, at the end of the valley, in the afternoon sun, lay the town, surrounded with its walls. A river wound, like a silver band, amongst the ripening rice-fields, whilst around rose majestic mountains, down whose sides at intervals poured lovely waterfalls." But so far as the city is concerned, it is distance that lends enchantment to the view. Pass within the massive walls, 25 feet broad and 15 feet high,

and between three and four miles in circumference, and everything approaching to beauty vanishes at once. "It is," says one journal, "like all other cities in these parts, crowded with filth and dilapidated houses, and without any sanitary arrangements for the benefit of the health of the inhabitants." The people, however, "have the reputation of honesty and simplicity from time immemorial."

Lo-Nguong is said to have been built 1100 years ago. It boasts of a long succession of sages and poets, whose claims to the gratitude of posterity are made the most of by the modern inhabitants. Its wealth, however, has been its bane. Nineteen times, it is stated, in the last three hundred years, has the city been a prey to the plundering bands of rebels and marauders that infest the empire; and the memorials of their handiwork are seen on every hand in the ruined houses which, for lack of public spirit, are suffered to remain an eyesore to the visitor.

Neither its celebrities nor its misfortunes, however, have made the name of Lo-Nguong familiar in many a town and village in far-off Britain. Its rank as a *hien* city, and its chequered career of eleven centuries, have failed to give it the smallest place in our manuals of geography; but ten years of a work of grace among a few score out of its thousands of inhabitants have drawn towards it the interest and sympathy of praying people in every part of England, and wherever the work of the Church Missionary Society is known. Let us trace out the instructive history of the Lo-Nguong Church during these ten years—a history, as we shall see, not less chequered by conflict and trial, as well as signalised by the lives of those whose memory is blessed, than the history of Lo-Nguong city from the eighth century downwards.

The first attempt to plant the standard of the cross in Lo-Nguong was in November, 1865. Mr. Wolfe visited the city with a Native catechist, and had at first an encouraging recep-

tion. They were "surrounded by a curious crowd, who wanted to know their business and all about them," but showed no rudeness or incivility. After two days' search, however, they failed to obtain a place that could be hired as a preaching-



ON THE ROAD FROM A-CHIA TO LO-NGUONG, LOOKING NORTH-EAST.
(*Lo-Nguong is seen lying in the valley. Behind the highest peak in the distance is Ning-Taik.*)

room, the people being afraid to let to foreigners. They discovered a respectable shop-keeper, who was a personal friend of the catechist Tang, and he kindly did his best to get a room, but without success. Shortly afterwards, determined not to be

baffled, Mr. Wolfe sent Kuong-Mi to take up his residence in the city, and, without holding regular services, to try and overcome the prejudices of the people, and make known the Gospel by personal intercourse with individuals. His mission was made a special subject of prayer at Fuh-Chow, and the answer was not long delayed, for within a week of his arrival Tang's friend succeeded in hiring a suitable room for a chapel.

Two months afterwards, Mr. Wolfe again visited Lo-Nguong. He found that great interest had already been aroused, and two apparently sincere inquirers gave promise of an early harvest. One of these, on leaving after a long and earnest conversation, said, "Sing-sang, it is a hard matter to believe. It is hard to be as holy as the religion requires, and there are many enemies: help me, therefore, by your prayers to the heavenly Father for me." All night the house was besieged with people, come merely to look at the foreigner; and next day, Sunday, January 21st, 1866, crowds assembled, despite drenching rain, to listen to the preaching. One old man said, "How can we live if we embrace the religion? You say we must not deceive, nor lie, nor swear, nor scold people: this is very strange doctrine!" At this there was a general laugh; but all admitted that the things denounced were wrong, and confessed that "the religion" was good—"only for that very reason they could not adopt it." How true it is that men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil! The chapel was not yet used, some opposition being exhibited; but a little later it was opened for preaching by Mr. Cribb, while on a visit to the city.

The first baptism at Lo-Nguong took place in October; but no particulars of the case are given. In December, however, three most interesting men were admitted into the Church. One was the first convert from the village of A-chia, and we shall refer more particularly to him in another chapter. The

two others were an old man of considerable property and influence, named Siek, and his son, Song To, the history of whose conversion is deeply interesting.

The son was the first brought to the Saviour. He was "one of the most notorious evil-livers in the whole city," and had brought such disgrace upon his family that, although he was an only son, his father was on the point of disinheriting him. One day, "by chance," he looked into the chapel as the catechist was preaching. Then and there the truth laid hold of his heart, and he gave up his sins forthwith, and yielded himself to the Redeemer, of whose love and power he had heard. The neighbours would not appreciate the inward and spiritual change; but they did see at once the difference in his outward life; it became a common subject of speculation among them, and it brought great numbers to inquire and to buy tracts and books. The old father could not at first believe in the reality of the reformation, and when he believed it he could not understand it; but although himself a zealous idol-worshipper, he could not oppose his son adopting a religion which had worked in him such a change. The son, however, became intensely anxious for the salvation of his father. On Mr. Wolfe's next visit the *quondam* reprobate came to him in his distress, and then and there fell upon his knees by Mr. Wolfe's bedside, and poured out his heart in prayer for old Siek's conversion. He would not be baptized, saying he must wait for his father, that they might enter the Church together. With some difficulty he persuaded the old man to come and see Mr. Wolfe, who then writes:—

I found him very dark and ignorant, but not at all disposed to prevent his son becoming a Christian; and at the end of a long conversation I could only elicit from him the old story, "The doctrine is very good, but it will not do for me; I will do what my fathers did before me."

They both returned home, however, and, in about two hours after, the

son returned almost breathless with joy, and informed us that his father had decided to be a Christian; that the incense vendor had been round to the shop as usual with his wares to sell for the approaching festival, but that his father refused to buy any, but sent him away, saying, "I have decided to worship no more idols; I want no more of such vain and foolish things; I have determined to become a Christian, and worship the true God." Of course we were all delighted, and returned hearty thanks to God on his behalf. The old man was present at evening prayers, and also at the baptism, and then remained the entire evening talking about religion. He keeps a large shop, and has a flourishing business. I hope and trust he will be enabled to carry out his determination, and become a truly-devoted Christian. Since I returned, I received a letter from the catechist, telling me that the whole family has given up idolatry, and that the old man and his son request me to visit Lo-Nguong shortly, and admit them all to baptism. The report that this old man believed spread like wild-fire, and scores came to the chapel, the catechist says, inquiring for books.

In subsequent letters we find interesting traits given of the character of old Siek. On February 17th, 1867, Mr. Wolfe writes:—

The father is sixty years old, but quite fresh and strong, and is growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. It would move the hardest heart to see that once hardened idolater sitting down and weeping at the remembrance of the many years spent in the service of sin and Satan. The devil at first often tempted him to think that he was too late in coming to Christ, that Jesus could not receive him now after his long life of idolatry; but this crisis is now past, and he has come out into the broad light of spiritual day. He is a man now of strong faith and great prayer, and has outstripped his son in spiritual grace and strength. I said one day to the son, "Song To, why is it that your father has gone on so far ahead of you in the doctrines when you were before him in the truth?" "Ah, Sing-sang," was the reply, "my father is continually praying. In the house he is always on his knees," and this is true. When first I spoke to him and asked him to pray with me, he looked bewildered at the idea, and out of politeness towards me knelt in a most awkward way. When last I heard him pray he reminded me of old Jacob, who said to the angel, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," so earnest were his pleadings with God, and he felt so much

at home in prayer. He is equally zealous for the conversion of others, and he spends his whole unoccupied time in exhorting others to believe in Jesus; and he has succeeded in one or two cases.

A few months later Mr. Wolfe describes a crowded service in the little chapel, at which the old man and his son both addressed the people, and gave their testimony to the truth and power of the Gospel. Siek dwelt on "the faith of Abraham, the promises to Isaac and Jacob, the history of the chosen seed, and the fulfilment of the old promises and prophecies in the coming of Christ"—a striking proof of his diligence in studying the Scriptures, seeing that he was absolutely ignorant of them not six months before. About this time the customary yearly collection in Lo-Nguong for the support of the idol-temples took place, and Siek and his son were applied to as usual. They quietly answered, "We can no longer support the work of the devil. We are Christians, and advise you to become so too." The incensed collectors threatened to pull down the shop, and began by damaging the counter, but the calm firmness of the old man disarmed further violence. We further read of the young man providing the lime for washing and plastering the chapel, and also accompanying the catechist on his preaching tours to the surrounding villages.

It was not long before further souls were given to the labours of Ching-Mi, the catechist now in charge, who, though without much education, even in a Chinese sense, and with natural abilities below the average, was nevertheless a man of prayer and of simple faith, and was one of the chief instruments in building up the Lo-Nguong Church. One case is thus described :—

Out of a family of three brothers two of them believed and were baptized. Soon afterwards the mother and the wife of one of these believed, and were also baptized. The elder brother, however, though he acknow-

ledged the truth of the doctrine for twelve months, resisted every argument and entreaty, and declared he could not join himself to the Church. He is a very clever man, and one who, if he were converted, I thought was very likely to prove useful to the Mission. He is a doctor by profession, and is celebrated for his skill. In the providence of God a circumstance has just occurred which has subdued his heart, and was the means of deciding him to cast in his lot with the people of God.

The catechist at Lo-Nguong received a letter from his son at Fuh-chau, informing him that he was dangerously ill, and begged him to hasten to his dying bedside. The father at once started for Fuh-chau, and brought this Lo-Nguong doctor with him to prescribe for his son. But it was too late: death had already entered, and was rapidly doing its deadly work. The day after their arrival the young man died. The doctor was present, and was struck with the peaceful and calm departure of the young Christian. This made a deep impression upon his mind; it was a confirmation of all that he had heard about the religion of Jesus, and light was immediately poured in upon his soul. The dying man addressed to the assembled friends words of rebuke for the tears that were being shed, and expressed a holy confidence in the merits of the Redeemer. "Do not weep for me," he said, "I am only going home a little sooner than you. I go before, you will follow. Why should you weep when I am going to see my Saviour, and be for ever with Him? I have perfect peace through the merits of Christ." He then gave directions about a few little matters, and concluded with a request that all should join in praising and thanking God for His great mercy in calling him to a knowledge of His truth. He then quietly passed away, and his soul was with the Saviour.

But these words of this dying Christian fastened themselves in the mind, and wrought life in the soul of the Lo-Nguong doctor. He left the chamber of death a changed man. He received, when least he expected it, or wished for it, the pearl of great price, and resolved from that very moment to give himself up to God. He was brought to me two or three days after by the catechist, and himself earnestly requested baptism. He was on his way back to Lo-Nguong, and that very night I baptized him in my study, in the presence of a few of the Native brethren. He departed the next morning early, on his way, rejoicing, and the catechist returned with him, sorrowing, no doubt, for the loss of an earthly son, but rejoicing that God had given him this spiritual son.

He was the subject of many prayers. His mother, sister, and two brothers often prayed for him, and now he returns to them to rejoice their hearts, and kneel with them around the same throne of grace as the lost one that was found.

Other applicants for baptism, though apparently sincere, were put off for various reasons: some because not sufficiently instructed in the faith; one or two because, though attending all the services and prayer-meetings regularly, they would not give up opium-smoking, which was a most necessary condition at Lo-Nguong, for this pernicious habit is frightfully common in the city, and very destructive in its effects. But in the following year the opium traffic itself yielded a convert to the Church. An old man, seventy-five years of age, who kept an opium shop in a village three miles from the city, abandoned his unholy traffic, and was baptized; and notwithstanding his age, and the hilly road to be traversed, he regularly walked in and out every Sunday for service, and for prayers on Thursday evenings. About the same time a great sensation was caused by the conversion of a government official, much respected in the city for his high character and integrity. His adhesion to the Church tended not a little to "take away her reproach among men." "If that man," it would be said, "has joined the doctrine, surely there can be nothing wrong in so doing." Another notable convert belonged to "the confraternity of vegetarians," who are strict Buddhists:—

He heard the truth from another candidate for baptism, and it appeared to him so reasonable and suited to his needs as a sinner, that he at once embraced it, and attended the chapel and placed himself under instruction. He now became a most zealous Christian, and wherever he went he exhorted the people to believe in Christ. He was the leading man in his confraternity, also a doctor by profession, and this circumstance has given him considerable influence and a standing in his neighbourhood. The result of his exertions is, that many members of his old

confraternity of vegetarians have followed his example, and many more, in his own village, have embraced the truth. His only son, however, will not give up Buddhism, and has become very much enraged against his father, and has left him altogether. This is a great trial to the father, but he bears it patiently, and prays in faith, and says he is sure God will give his only son to his faith and prayers. When it was known that he embraced Christianity, several devout Buddhists from a distant village came to his house to inquire the reason of the change, and asked an explanation of Christianity. The result of this interview was the conversion of these five individuals, who are now candidates for baptism. And so the work goes on, and God seems to bless the efforts of this one man. He is a man of a most unobtrusive character, very quiet, but becomes full of fire when called upon to address his countrymen on the subject of Christianity. He was baptized on Sunday with the others. He showed a great deal of feeling on the occasion, and I do entertain good hopes that God may make great use of him amongst his countrymen.

Larger and more commodious premises were now engaged for the use of the Mission. It cost 200 dollars (about £50) to put the place in proper repair, and to set up a pulpit, &c., and the whole sum was given by old Siek "as a thank offering to God for calling him to a knowledge of his Saviour." The pulpit, which he ordered himself, was a wooden one beautifully carved. One of the first to occupy it was Bishop Alford, on the occasion of his first visitation tour in May, 1868, when nine persons belonging to Lo-Nguong were confirmed, besides nineteen who came in from other places. "The independent way in which the women acted on this occasion," writes Mr. Wolfe, "interested and encouraged me very much. It was a great sacrifice of feeling on their part to brave popular prejudice, and appear boldly, and in public kneel before the Bishop to be confirmed."

Thus was laid the foundation of the Lo-Nguong church. One by one the rough stones from the quarry were brought out by the mighty working of the great Builder, and fitted

into their place in the rising edifice. How the baser materials —wood, hay, stubble—came afterwards to be mixed up with the true "lively stones," we shall see in the next chapter.

Sowers went throughout the land,
In the time of autumn leaves;
Each with full and ready hand,
Each with thought of harvest sheaves.
Let us thus be doing
Work, O God, for Thee!
Daily, hourly, sowing
For Eternity.

Reapers now in golden fields,
Bind apace the heavy corn;
Earth her willing tribute yields,
Joyful shines the harvest morn.
Slumb'ring souls and sleeping,
Master, dost Thou see?
Let the thought of *reaping*
Waken us for Thee.

Author of "Copsley Annals."

CHAPTER IX.

LO-NGUONG.—II. THE CHURCH TESTED.

And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up; some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.—*St. Matt.* xiii. 4—8.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.—*St. John* xv. 2.

Wheat and tares together sown
Unto joy or sorrow grown:
Lord of harvest, grant that we
Wholesome grain and pure may be.

Alford.

SO promising a mission as that at Lo-Nguong was not likely to be let alone by the great enemy of souls. In the Acts of the Apostles we find the primitive Church attacked by him in several ways. Persecution from without, corrupt motives (as in the case of Simon Magus), false professions (as with Ananias and Sapphira), "sharp contention" between even a Paul and a Barnabas—all these devices, and many others, were employed then to spoil God's work. And the very same perils have beset the progress of the Gospel in China. Some of them we shall now see testing with a fiery trial the infant Church of Lo-Nguong.

It was from Lo-Nguong that the Gospel spread to A-chia and other places, as will be noticed in succeeding chapters. But a remarkable movement began in 1868 in the villages immediately round Lo-Nguong, or within a radius of four or five miles, Ki-po, Sing-Chuo, Siong-Nang, Hai-Yeu, Kien-nang, &c.; and the converts in them have always been reckoned as belonging to the Lo-Nguong Church. The following very interesting extract from a letter of Mr. Wolfe's, dated May 31st 1869, introduces us to this movement:—

The work has grown to an extent which has exceeded my most sanguine expectations. The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. There appears to be quite a movement towards Christianity in this district. I was almost overpowered on the following Sunday to witness the large number who came asking for admission into the Church of God. This movement extends over a wide extent of country, and without any apparent immediate cause was simultaneous in places and villages over ten miles apart. The catechist at the station has not been able to leave the chapel for months, in consequence of the flow of inquirers constantly pouring in to learn about the salvation of their souls. There were about ninety candidates on the books, besides a large number who were earnestly seeking and receiving instruction. I at once decided to visit all the candidates at their own houses, and thus be better able to judge of their state and fitness to be received into the Church. Some of the villages in which the candidates live are distant from Lo-Nguong city about nine miles, and from each other about twenty. At the end of three days, however, I succeeded in visiting nearly all. I was much interested and greatly encouraged by these few days' visiting. I found a deep spirit of earnestness pervading the minds of these people. I found no traces of idolatry in their houses. I found the Prayer-book and hymn-book well read, and their little children able to repeat many of the hymns and prayers. The Bible was in every house, and though the majority of them could not read it, all endeavoured to make as much use of it as they could. Their little ones of about four years old were taught to pray, and I have heard the children of this age and over talk of Jesus and of God, and of prayer, as subjects with which they seemed familiar. They could tell you that Jesus was the Saviour of the world, that He loved them, and that God was the Great Being who made the world and every thing, and that it was wrong

to worship idols. Furthermore, I found the women, who never had an opportunity of attending the chapel, quite familiar with the truth of salvation through Jesus Christ; and many of them expressed an earnest desire to be baptized. I was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy and cordiality by these people, and at every house I was pressed to partake of their hospitality. At one village, a house which I visited contained a family of twenty-two, including children. In the large hall, where the domestic idols are generally kept, and where the Chinese prostrate themselves before the spirits of their ancestors, I found everything altered consistent with Christian views and feelings. At one side was a table, on which was placed two entire copies of the Bible, and several Prayer-books and hymn-books, and a number of good tracts. This large family meet regularly for morning and evening prayer in this great hall, and the elder brother always conducts the service. Numbers of the villagers also join on these occasions, and the result is, that many are induced to attend the chapel at Lo-Nguong on Sundays, and appear interested in the Gospel. This village is about six miles from Lo-Nguong. At the close of my visitation I could not help feeling very much that God had commenced to work amongst this people.

On Saturday evening, which is devoted throughout all our stations to special prayer for the conversion of China, a great many of these people attended, though they had to walk some miles, and return again the same night to their houses. As Sunday morning approached, I began to feel more deeply my responsibility, in view of the services of the day, and the numbers I might be privileged to admit into communion with the Church. Missionaries have not now the gift of discernment of spirits, and there is naturally "fear and trembling" mixed with the joy which one feels in admitting large numbers into the Church. Shortly after breakfast the candidates and inquirers came pouring in, and soon the church was well filled with a goodly company. Out of the large number who presented themselves for baptism we selected, after a general examination, thirty-five, who were again individually examined as to their motives and faith in Christ. Many of these showed beyond doubt that they loved the Saviour, and all of them gave me satisfaction, and I felt I could not do otherwise than admit them into the privilege of Christian communion. May the Lord keep them steadfast to the end! Many of those whom I rejected felt much disappointed, but the hope of being at some future time admitted soon encouraged them, and they joined in the service that followed, when over thirty of their number were baptized, as

joyfully as the rest. The baptism took place immediately after the Second Lesson, which was read with much energy by Ling, the catechist. After service I was completely exhausted, and was unable to preach; the catechist also was quite knocked up: so there was no sermon in the morning.

The time for dinner now came on, and soon all the seats and forms were turned into dining-tables for about 100 people, who brought their own rice, &c., in order that they might be able to attend the Sunday services. The scene was deeply interesting. What was the motive that induced so many people to come so far and keep the Sabbath, and attend regularly, at a great deal of personal inconvenience, the services in the house of the Lord? I could think of none but a desire on their parts to seek the salvation of their souls; and I could do nothing but look and wonder what the Lord was about to do for this poor sin-bound population. Oh! may the Lord make bare His arm, and may this prove a real work of grace!

Dinner being over, and everybody refreshed by that process, the chapel was at once re-arranged, and all the people assembled for the afternoon service. After reading the service, I preached from Eph. ii. 1—13. The chapel was well filled, and it was most encouraging to witness the deep attention which was manifested while I expounded this portion of Scripture. I preached for over an hour, and would have continued longer had not the catechist very properly intimated that many of the congregation had twelve miles to travel to reach their homes, and that it was desirable to dismiss them. As each passed out of the chapel, and bade me a most affectionate farewell, I felt a sensation of joy which none but a missionary in like circumstances can appreciate.

But human motives are very mixed at the best, and although many of those who thus pressed into the kingdom of God proved themselves the true subjects of Divine grace, it was not so with all. In consequence of the ill-treatment of a convert at A-chia, Mr. Wolfe had succeeded in getting an official proclamation issued warning the people against molesting the Christians; and this seems to have given rise to the idea that the influence of an Englishman would be exerted on the side of any who joined the Church in the petty lawsuits in which so many Chinamen are continually involved. Some appear to

have made a profession of Christianity in the hope of securing such powerful interference in their behalf. These, it need scarcely be said, brought no credit on the Christian name. There is no more favourite device of the adversary than to sow tares even in the garden of the Lord; and what has been seen everywhere in every age of the Church we must not be surprised to find in China.

A fiery trial was perhaps necessary at this juncture to separate the dross from the pure metal; and it was not long in coming.

On the night of Sunday, June 20th, 1869, a body of the Chinese soldiers and police, accompanied by some of the gentry and *literati*, attacked and broke open the Mission chapel, destroyed the furniture, and seriously damaged the building. Having plundered the catechist, who lived in an adjoining room, they proceeded to the house of old Siek, and committed a similar outrage there, turning the inmates, who had retired to rest, out into the street. The old man was not in Lo-Nguong at the time, we must say providentially, for he would scarcely have escaped with his life had he been at home. This outbreak was but the first of a series of acts of lawless violence perpetrated by the police upon unoffending Christians. It was pleaded by the mandarins that Siek and two or three others had wantonly destroyed the idols in one of the temples; but this was never proved, though it seems probable that some of the converts had been more zealous than discreet in their conduct, and had failed to "walk in wisdom towards them that were without." There was, however, no pretence that the Christians generally had done anything to irritate their heathen neighbours; yet the whole community was for several months subjected to a distressing persecution. Some were beaten, some robbed of their little all, some dragged before the magistrates upon false charges,

and compelled to purchase their liberty by heavy payments. One man had a dying thief laid at his door by the district policeman, who then accused him of murder. Another was kept in prison for many months, and died there.

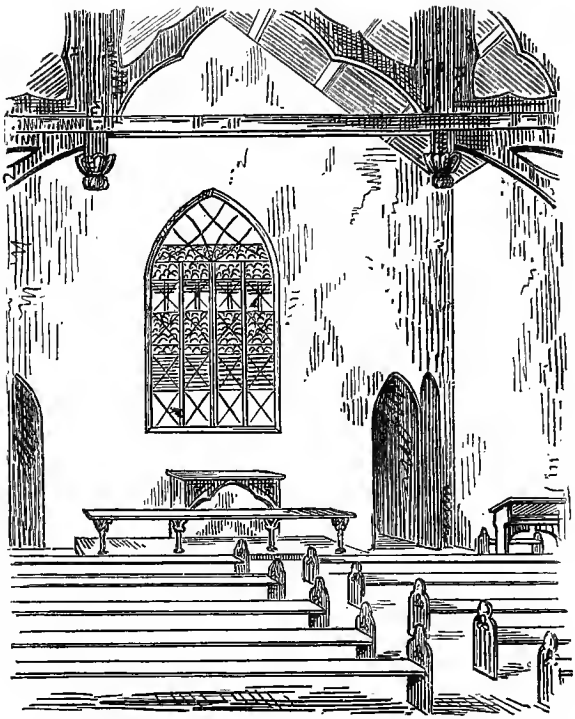
This persecution seems to have been the work almost exclusively of the governing classes, the people generally taking little or no part in it, and in some cases even showing sympathy for the sufferers. But the impression gained ground that Christianity was a proscribed religion. It certainly could not now be said that no reproach attached to the Christians, much less that it was advantageous to be one. The wrecked chapel standing unused was a public witness to the ban under which the infant Church lay. Moreover, the delays which took place in obtaining redress for all the material damage done, owing to everything being referred, and referred again, to the supreme authorities at Peking, encouraged the local officials to further acts of annoyance and petty persecution. We cannot wonder, under these circumstances, that half-hearted disciples, and especially those who, as intimated above, joined the Church to get some personal advantage, fell away. Inquirers drew back in alarm, and some men of the baptized kept aloof, not daring to suffer shame for the name of Christ. Yet the majority of the little flock stood firm, and more than a hundred met Sunday by Sunday at the village of Ki-po, three miles from the city, for common prayer and praise, an old convert there lending his house for the purpose, although thereby he incurred no little persecution.

In the early part of 1870, Mr. Wolfe paid a last visit to Lo-Nguong before leaving for England, and the Christians assembled at Ki-po to bid him farewell. "There were some present," he writes, "who had lost nearly all they had in the persecution. But this was not their only or their greatest trial. The reproaches of their own friends, and in several

instances of their unbelieving wives and relatives, were harder to bear than all, and have caused more distress to many of our dear brethren than the spoiling of their goods." Even with such prospects before them, no less than forty of those who had attached themselves to the Church, but were as yet unbaptized, applied for baptism on this occasion. Mr. Wolfe only accepted half that number, declining, after consultation with the Rev. Wong Kiu-taik, to admit the rest because they had been induced from fear to subscribe to an idol festival the week before. They had paid the money most reluctantly, and under protest, but it was necessary to show by decided action that there could be no compromise with idolatry.

Shortly after Mr. Wolfe's departure, the compensation-money demanded by the British Consul, amounting to 1,600 dollars, was received from the authorities, and with this sum Mr. Cribb, who was now in charge of the whole Mission, built a new and substantial church on the site of the old ruined one, designed to seat two hundred people. We have said that Bishop Alford was one of the first to preach in the old chapel; and it was his privilege, on his second visitation tour, in April, 1871, to open the new church. His narrative of the visit is very interesting. It shows clearly enough how busy the great enemy had been among the Lo-Nguong flock; but the fact that, after a searching examination, he was able to administer the rite of confirmation to forty candidates, is sufficient testimony to the reality of the work that had been going on. The Bishop wrote as follows, in a letter which appeared in the *Colonial Church Chronicle*:—

I was particularly anxious that the occasion of my visit, and the re-opening of the church, should not be made an opportunity of triumph over their neighbours on the part of the Christians. On this account I requested that the Rev. Wong Kiu-taik, the native deacon, on whose



LO-NGUONG CHURCH.

judgment we could rely, should be sent before us to Lo-Nguong to arrange things wisely for us. On our arrival we were glad to find the city quiet, and though, as we passed through the streets, our presence seemed to create a little sensation, no manifestation whatever of displeasure was evinced. As we entered the Mission premises through the new church, we had a good opportunity of inspecting the building. It is a plain, substantial church, capable of seating two hundred people. It has a good pulpit, reading-desk, table, and rails, with the Ten Commandments, Creed, and Lord's Prayer, in Chinese, painted on the wall. The three lodging-rooms above for the missionary and catechist, with the

inner room below for inquirers, and the school-room, remain as before. In the three lodging-rooms we soon established ourselves for the night. We had considerable conversation with the catechist of the place, who appeared to me to be a sensible, straightforward, Christian man. And after a supper of oysters, the smallest I ever saw (some six on a bunch), and of prawns, the biggest I ever ate (one being a plateful), we thankfully prepared for a quiet night.

Good Friday, April 7.—We were very anxious in reference to the case of some ten Christians, whose conduct had been unsatisfactory. We felt that it would be injurious to the cause of the Gospel in Lo-Nguong did we allow their unfaithfulness to pass unnoticed. Their names were given to me by Mr. Cribb, the list having been submitted to the Rev. Wong Kiu-taik, as handed in by the Native catechists. I thought it right to examine each case separately, to ascertain whether the catechist had himself remonstrated with the individual, and how his remonstrance had been taken. After careful investigation, there seemed to be no ground for doubt but that some had disgraced their Christian profession. This led me to examine carefully into the state of the Christian Church at Lo-Nguong. I called for the baptismal register, and with Mr. Cribb, Wong Kiu-taik, and the catechists (as their testimony was needed), I inquired into particulars. The inquiry lasted two hours and more, and I detained the service some time that the result might be relied upon, as I intended to address the congregation on the subject. I found that from 1866 to 1871 the number of baptisms had been 109, of whom 83 were adults and 26 infants. Of these, 3 were dead, 7 had gone to congregations elsewhere, 5 had been lost sight of, 47 were accounted for, and 21 had gone back. These figures presented me with some important topics of exhortation, which I trust was useful. My address was listened to with great attention, and I think it was received with good Christian feeling. The silence that prevailed when I spoke very solemnly upon "apostacy" was very striking, especially in a Chinese congregation, who are too often restless and noisy in demeanour. I rejoice, however, to add that 40 candidates for confirmation were on this occasion approved and presented, 37 men and 3 women, my last confirmation here having been held in May, 1868. The service began about 10.30 A.M. The Rev. Wong Kiu-taik entered the new reading-desk in his surplice, and read the Litany very clearly and devoutly, the congregation responding, as is their manner, in a loud but plaintive tone. A hymn was then sung in true Chinese style, to a familiar English tune. Mr. Cribb read the

"preface" to the Confirmation Service, and interpreted my address with much apparent readiness and effect. When I produced a sheet of paper, and read out the figures above given (I mentioned no names; these were known in another way), every eye was fixed, and I think I heard some long-drawn sighs over those who had gone back. Not that I failed, I trust, to speak words of encouragement also. My address was upon the death of Christ—the history, *Who* died, and *why* He died, and *how* we are to obtain the benefits—on which basis I made a special address to the Church and candidates for confirmation. I thought it my duty specially to guard them against giving occasion of offence, but did not mention the broken idols and past troubles. I guarded them also against litigation, especially on the supposition that as Christians they had any claim on missionary interference in their behalf. I told them they were subjects—the Christian subjects of the Emperor of China, whom, *as Christians*, it was their duty to honour, and whose subordinate officers it was their duty to obey, as the missionaries, and myself also, though Englishmen, respected and obeyed them when residing in China. The laying on of hands was very orderly, and the service was as well conducted for decorum and devoutness as the confirmations we witness in England.

We left Lo-Nguong about 1.30 P.M. There was a considerable crowd of Chinese at the church door to see us depart. They were very well-behaved, and as I stood ready to enter my chair, I said in English, and Mr. Cribb interpreted, that I wished the people in Lo-Nguong all peace and happiness, adding that true happiness was to be found in the religion of the Bible. They bowed in their polite manner, and so did I; and so we departed.

This second visit of the Bishop may be said to have marked the close of the first epoch in the history of the Lo-Nguong Church. There had been the sowing of the seed; it had rapidly sprung up; then persecution and tribulation had arisen; the sun was hot, and some of the young plants were scorched, and because they had no root they had withered away; others were choked with thorns—the cares of this life—and bare no fruit; yet a goodly harvest was there, where the seed had fallen on the honest and good heart, prepared by the Spirit of all grace. And in the spiritual world there is a

power beyond any that is manifested in the natural world—that "ancient power of Christ's touch," to which the lines appended so beautifully allude. The scorched and withered plants may again "revive as the corn and grow as the vine." The choking thorns may be cut away by the sharp knife of the heavenly Husbandman, and the young trees may shoot up with renewed strength and freedom. And so, in no small measure, has it been at Lo-Nguong.

O Saviour Christ, our woes dispel;
For some are sick, and some are sad,
And some have never loved Thee well,
And some have lost the love they had;

And some have found the world is vain,
Yet from the world they break not free;
And some have friends who give them pain,
Yet have not sought a friend in Thee.

And none, O Lord, have perfect rest,
For none are wholly free from sin;
And they who fain would serve Thee best,
Are conscious most of wrong within.

O Saviour Christ, Thou too art man;
Thou hast been troubled, tempted, tried;
Thy kind but searching glance can scan
The very wounds that shame would hide.

Thy touch has still its ancient power;
No word from Thee can fruitless fall;
Hear in this solemn evening hour,
And in Thy mercy heal us all.

H. Twells.

CHAPTER X.

LO-NGUONG.—III. THE CHURCH GROWING.

I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.—*Hos.* xiv. 5, 6.

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye?—1 *Thess.* ii. 19.

The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.—*Prov.* xvi. 31.

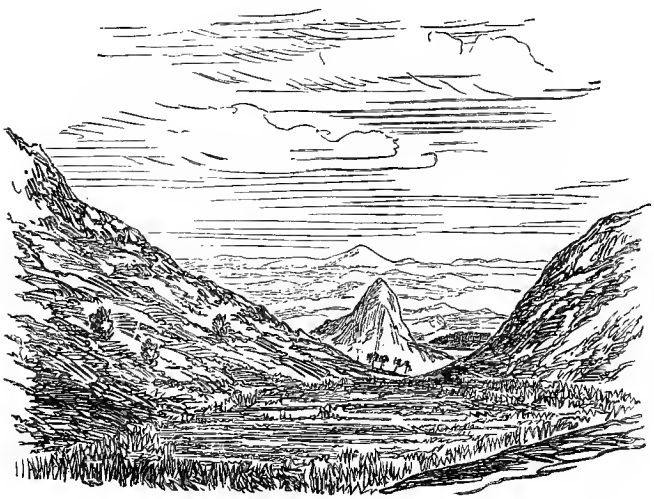
And duly shall appear,
In verdure, beauty, strength,
The tender blade, the stalk, the ear,
And the full corn at length.

J. Montgomery.

A NEW period of advance now began at Lo-Nguong. "The Churches had rest throughout" the district, "and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

At the end of this year (1871) Mr. Mahood, who was now alone at Fuh-Chow, wrote that everything was peaceable at Lo-Nguong, and the inquirers increasing steadily. The Sunday congregation averaged sixty or seventy, and would have been much larger but for the long distance at which some of the members lived. The excommunications of the preceding year had done good, by setting a higher standard of Christian living, and showing the heathen what manner of persons the

converts ought to be. Mr. Mahood mentions the case of one man who had stood firm notwithstanding great opposition from his relatives. At length his child died, and when all the rest of the family were mourning around him, he said to them, "Before I became a Christian I was like you, living without a hope in God; but now I know that God gave me that child, and inasmuch as He has taken it away, I cannot grieve." His



VALLEY AND CITY OF LO-NGUONG.

mother and other relatives were so struck with his faith and resignation that they renounced idolatry, and united themselves to the Christian community.

At the close of the next year (1872), Mr. Mahood reported, "Congregation still increasing; average attendance, 85; communicants, 59; the candidates for baptism have also increased considerably."

In February, 1873, Mr. Wolfe, having returned in fresh health and strength from England, again visited Lo-Nguong, after an absence of nearly three years. As he walked over the mountains from Tang-Iong, the mountains seemed to him to cast a melancholy shadow all around, and he felt its sombre influence weighing down his spirits. "But the sight of the city of Lo-Nguong stretching away in the distant valley, which suddenly burst upon the vision from an elevated ridge in the mountains, acted like magic in dispelling all gloomy feelings," and his thoughts turned at once to the "dear converts" he was about to meet.

He arrived at the city gate at four o'clock on Saturday afternoon, the 15th. The first to greet him there was old Siek, who welcomed him affectionately, and then proceeded to pour into his ear "the long tale of all his woes." "It seemed," writes Mr. Wolfe, "an evident relief to the poor old man's mind thus to unburden itself." Two bitter trials especially weighed upon him. One was the persistent clinging of his wife to heathenism. During all the six years of his Christian course she had stood aloof from the God her husband had learned to know and love, and after his losses in the outbreak of 1869, she ceased not to taunt him with the question, "What has your Christianity done for you?" The other trial was, perhaps, severer still. It was the falling away of his son Song-to—of that very son to whose prayers and influence his own conversion was due—not indeed to idolatry, but to coldness and irreligion, and to his old habit of gambling. Mr. Wolfe sent for the young man:—

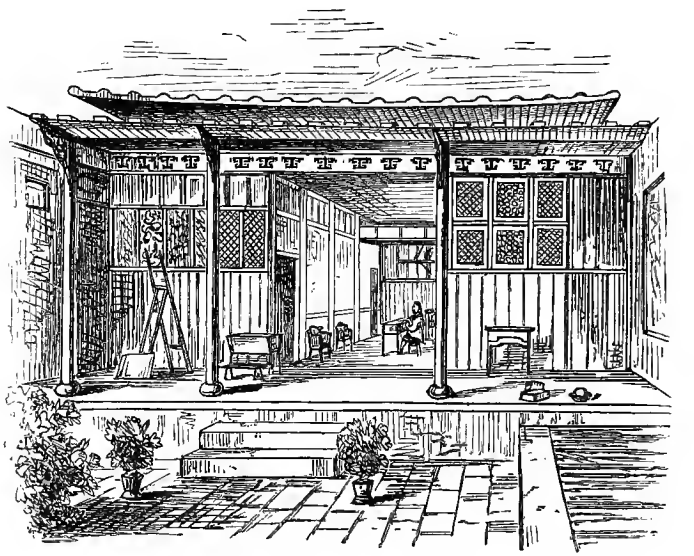
He came about dusk. He expressed pleasure at seeing me back, and asked after the welfare of my wife and children; but there was absent from his manner towards me the warmth and cordiality and confidence of former days, when we could both kneel down together and pour out our hearts before God. He looked, evidently, sad. I talked to him long and

earnestly; I spoke of the happiness of former years when he and I went together through the neighbouring villages telling the people of the love of Jesus. I pointed to the fact that scores of those very villagers who then opposed us, and abused us with bad language, are now faithful followers of Jesus, and regular attendants at the house of God; while he, who was among the first to tell these very people of Christ, had gone back to the wickedness and folly of the world, and never came near the house of prayer. The retrospect was intensely painful to myself. He was reserved, looked pained, rose up, and with a sorrowful accent said, "Good-bye, Sing-sang," and took his departure. He did not visit me again during my stay at Lo-Nguong. His little son, however, is a daily attendant at our school, and regularly accompanies his grandfather to church on Sundays. I still have hopes of the young man, and pray God to give him renewed repentance, that he may be again a comfort to his aged father, and an assistance to the Church in this place. It must be understood here that he has not relapsed into idolatry. He worships no idol, nor takes part in any idolatrous custom; but his conduct is inconsistent, and he does not observe the Sabbath. Gambling is his great besetting sin.

We shall hear of both the opposing wife and the backsliding son again presently. Another of the Christians whose conduct had been inconsistent, and who had absented himself from church for some months, came of his own accord and told him all his sins, weeping bitterly. "Thus," says Mr. Wolfe, "the first evening spent at Lo-Nguong was one of mixed feelings—joy and sorrow, hopes and fears, blending together. But joy and hope predominated, and the accounts I received from the catechist Tang in the stillness of the night, when all had either departed or retired to rest, cheered me greatly." Of this "faithful and well-tried" Native brother, Mr. Wolfe writes warmly. "He is highly respected by the heathen gentlemen of the city, many of whom have presented him with complimentary scrolls *à la mode Chinoise*. He is also loved and respected by the Christians, and is a man of sound sense and good judgment."

What occurred on Sunday morning shall be told in Mr. Wolfe's own words:—

Breakfast was soon ready, but ere I could sit down to it, the hall was filled with the Christians who flocked in from the country to Divine worship. With great difficulty I got through breakfast. The dear people



CATECHIST'S HOUSE AT LO-NGUONG.

evidently were over-excited with joy. One would persist in sitting close by me, and, while I was eating, whispered into my ear from time to time how he longed for my return, and how pleased he was to see me. Another would stand behind me and tell me of a dream which he had, and in which he saw me standing by his bedside. Others would interrupt and sorrowfully ask why I looked so careworn and thin in the face. Another ventured to say he knew the cause—viz., that I had to leave my young children behind in England, and that this was enough to make me sor-

rowful. Then a flood of inquiries from all sides about the dear children; if I left them with friends who would be kind to them and love them.

These and a thousand other little marks of attention and of welcome convinced me that these dear people were glad to see me, and I am not ashamed to say that I feel proud of their affection towards me. As they stood around me this Sabbath morning, like a flock of children looking for some words of recognition from me, I felt happy beyond expression at the assurance that our labours here have not been in vain.

About two hundred assembled in the church for morning service. The Rev. Wong read the prayers. I preached from the parable of the prodigal son. The devotion and the attention of this congregation were very great. There was nothing to be desired in this respect. The harmony of the singing was sadly defective, but the heartiness with which the entire congregation joined in it was deeply encouraging.

I am sorry to say that there is no place for the women in the new church. There are about fifty women in connection with this congregation, but as most of the members live out in the country their women cannot attend the church in the city, even if there were suitable accommodation for them in it. The catechist's wife is exerting herself among the women, but she has to ride several miles to visit them in their own villages. She has service for them now once a week in the village of Sing-Chuo, where about thirty of them meet together. The great, the pressing difficulty which now presents itself to us is, how are we to meet the wants of the women in religious instruction? The men can and do walk long distances to church, but the women cannot do this with their crippled and deformed feet. We want a band of Native female catechists, and until we can get these we can do very little for the instruction of the women.

Most of the congregation remained for afternoon service, though many of them had miles to travel to their homes afterwards. The Rev. Wong again read, and I preached. Between the services I had a meeting for catechising the children. Many of the adults attended and seemed to enjoy it much, and I have no doubt derived as much benefit from it, and probably more benefit, than from an ordinary sermon.

Later in this year, the death of an aged convert who had suffered much in the persecution is recorded. Mr. Wolfe gives a most touching account of a visit he paid to him shortly before his death :—

I found him very sick and weak. I read and prayed with him, and

spoke some considerable time to him on spiritual things. When I had done he got up in his bed, and knelt on his knees, and offered up a most simple, touching prayer to God. He confessed himself a great sinner, and prayed for pardon through the merits of Jesus. He declared his love for the Saviour in such touching language: "I love Thee, Thou most precious Saviour," he said, and then prayed most earnestly for the success of the Lord's work everywhere, especially in his own Lo-Nguong. He prayed for his family, especially for his wife, who was to be baptized on the coming Sabbath. He prayed for myself, and thanked God who had sent me so far over the sea to teach him and his countrymen the love of Jesus, and then, gasping for breath, he asked God graciously, when the time came for him to depart, to receive him, through the inexhaustible merits of the Saviour, into that home which He has prepared for all His people. It is from such a scene as this that the disheartened missionary goes, inspired with fresh courage and fresh faith, to do battle with the dark heathenism around on every side. This aged Chinaman was one of our earliest converts at Lo-Nguong, and suffered severely in the persecution three or four years ago. He at that time gave up his own house as a place of worship to the persecuted and scattered disciples of Jesus. He suffered for his boldness for Christ, as far as worldly things are concerned, but oh, he has gained infinitely in the possession of a living faith, and a bright and a glorious hope of immortality and eternal life! I fear I shall not see him again here below; but oh, I do look forward to the hope of seeing him above, in our Father's home! and I shall never forget the comfort and encouragement which he administered to my tried faith on the night of September 30, 1873.

In a later letter Mr. Wolfe says, "His last hours on earth were spent in earnest prayers for the spread of Christ's kingdom, and his last breath was exhausted in exhorting his friends and family to cleave closely to the Saviour. The happy result has been that some who heard him, and witnessed his triumphant faith over death, have since joined themselves to the Lord whom their departed friend trusted and loved so well."

The reports during the past two years have only spoken generally of progress and encouragement. But Mr. Hutchinson's journal of his tour gives a most interesting account of his visit to Lo-Nguong in October, 1874, which we extract in full.

It will be noticed with especial thankfulness that old Siek's wife was baptized at last on this occasion, eight years after her husband :—

We were lovingly looked for. Many Christians met us as we approached the gates. The greetings, "Peng ang!" ("Peace!") "To Peng ang?" ("Is it peace?"), were heard on each side continually. At last we turned in through a narrow gateway, and found ourselves in front of the catechist's house, with a fine church on our left. Many Christians



SING, OF LO-NGUONG, AGED 77.

were assembled here, and great indeed appeared their joy at seeing brother Wolfe. Here was old Siek, his son, and grandson. I had often read of these before, but it was refreshing to see them for one's self—a family with a story of its own. Another fine old man of seventy-seven years, old Sing, claimed attention also. It seemed like a return of apostolic days to meet these fine sturdy old Christians, who have suffered the loss of all, and endured stripes and imprisonment for the Saviour's sake in the course of the last six or seven years—manly men, too, with glistening eyes as they told of a Saviour ever present in their hours of distress, and simply spoke of their own conflict and temptation to give up —men earnestly anxious to bring their fellow-men to Christ also. There

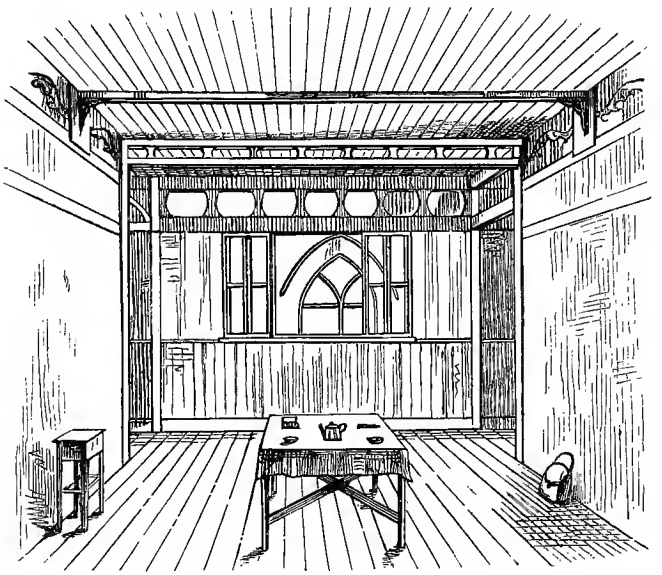
was a plain common-sense reality about it all that touched one's heart more than any outward display of excitement could have done. At last, to have a little quiet, we walked on the walls, which are between three and four hundred years old, overgrown with grass. Returning, found Christians assembling for evening prayer. Being Saturday, the subject was God's blessing upon all missionary effort.

Sunday.—It was very pleasant to awake in a large airy upper room, through the window of which we could see the east end of the church. For a time we forgot that we were in the midst of a heathen city. The Christians kept coming in for the service, arriving from the neighbouring villages. We missed the "church-going bell." This is one deficiency of the church, which, we trust, will be supplied in due time. All being ready for service, the examination of candidates for baptism took place in the hall of the catechist's house, and six men and five women were accepted out of those present. The church, which seats about 200, was well filled with men; it lacks accommodation for the women, who were crowded together on the right of the chancel. About 100 Christian men were present, and behind them the heathen pressed in. Besides the eleven adults, two children were baptized. What made the service of special interest was the fact that one of the women was the wife of old Siek, the lime-burner, once a deadly enemy to the faith, who used to taunt her husband, "What has Christianity done for you?" Grace has triumphed at last, and she has been given to the believing prayers of her husband. It was a joyous day for him, in spite of the persecution he is still enduring. Then, after the sermon, it was our further privilege to partake of the Lord's Supper with forty-one Chinamen and eight women, making, with our three selves, fifty-two communicants. It was a happy season. Non-communicating attendance is a necessity here—it prevents the heathen having any ground for a suspicion of evil in connection with the Christian rites, and stimulates the inquirers to press on towards the full realisation of their fellowship as believers in a crucified Saviour.

In the afternoon the catechists with us, and the one in charge of the station, addressed in succession audiences of heathen. What a wonderful power there is in Christianity to develop the latent capabilities of men! These preachers would, but for the Gospel, have possessed, unsuspected, the power of oratory. One especially, Wa Hing by name—a handsome young fellow, earnest and winning in his ways—seems never tired of preaching short, well-pointed discourses, which command the attention

at once, possessing, as Wolfe frequently remarked, a marvellous power of saying a great deal in a few words.

Monday, Oct. 12th.—Donning our best garments, we visited the Yamun —in the first place, to exhibit our passports; and then to converse with the mandarin about some exactions and wrongs done to the Christians, contrary to the treaty of Tien-tsin. This officer received us in half-dress, and no preparations were made for tea. He looked very cross, spitting



MISSIONARY'S UPPER ROOM AT LO-NGUONG.

about, and otherwise exhibiting marked want of courtesy. However, he promised to remove at once the cross which the police had affixed to the door of one of old Siek's houses, thereby preventing him using or letting the premises, and also to issue a proclamation forbidding the maltreatment of Christians in a neighbouring village where they have recently been beaten. We gladly left the dirty precincts of the Yamun, noting the absence of the usual courtesies on the part of the mandarin.

We were now to visit the Christians in some of the surrounding villages. On the way to Hai Yeu, called at a Christian's house; gave medicine for children, ague being very prevalent, and quinine much in demand. The poor fellow himself has a bad leg. After advice and conversation, had prayer. . . . .

We next arrived at Ki-po village, where lives Sing, one of the old Christians who met us on Saturday. We visited him at his shop, once an opium-shop, but this he gave up on becoming a Christian. Then he had a fair competency, but, stirred up by the enemy of souls, the mandarin's runners or policemen beat him about the head, robbed him right and left, and nearly killed him; then a nephew robbed him of what was left; and now he gets a trifle from sale of salt, straw shoes, and other small things, and is assisted also out of the church fund. In spite of all these reverses he has a happy face, and his venerable appearance itself commands respect; he is emphatically "a living epistle, known and read of all men." Here, too, we visited four families, farmers—all Christians —and were regaled with tea *ad libitum*. In the neighbouring village of Kien-nang we found nine Christian families, one a farmer of seven years' standing in the Church. At his house we dined; tea was pressed upon us from all sides, and, not to give offence, we taxed our powers to the utmost, endeavouring to imbibe the cheering beverage on each occasion, as if it were the first time of tasting it that day.

At Ting Tai we found an interesting family, or rather the families of seven brothers, six of whom are Christians, all married; one of these is a promising student at Fuh-Chow. Here again we had preaching, and could not but observe that there was not the slightest sign of hostility. On all sides the greatest courtesy was exhibited in receiving us, and genial kindness shown in many ways by heathen as well as by Christians. Whilst with our minds we admired the beautiful scenery of these well-watered, well-wooded valleys, our spirits rejoiced in the wonderful work of grace going on amongst these simple-minded villagers. The women seemed especially glad to see us and to have prayer and preaching in their midst, as, owing to the peculiar social customs of China, they cannot regularly attend Divine service in the central church, as can the men.

On the way back we crossed the river on a narrow bridge, composed of single planks about eighteen inches wide, supported on stakes. In the evening we gladly saw old Siek, his son, and grandson at prayers. The son seems gradually returning to a more earnest Christian walk, although still far from what he used to be. It is a hard trial to a young man to

risk the loss of all for Christ. He has already shared in his father's sufferings, and naturally looking to the future, and thinking of his wife and family, it is not surprising that faith should sometimes fail. His case calls for our prayers and sympathy. It was very pleasant to hear the stillness of the night broken by the voices of the Christian women singing, "For ever with the Lord," and other hymns. Thinking over the scenes of the day, the circuit of ten or twelve miles from one Christian house to another, and remembering that ten years since there was not a single Christian in the locality, we could but say, "What hath God wrought!"

It will be seen that Song-tò was giving some promise of returning to his allegiance; but, alas! it was but apparent. Later accounts are less hopeful. In March, 1876, there were "no signs of repentance."

Lo-Nguong has now a resident ordained Chinese pastor, one of the four men admitted to holy orders by Bishop Burdon on Easter Day, 1876. Let us hope that his influence may be specially blessed to the restoration of the backslider, the building up of the spiritual Church, and the salvation of very many of the heathen around.

If some poor wandering child of Thine
Have spurned to-day the voice Divine,
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin,
Let him no more lie down in sin.

Keble.

Come home; come home!
You are weary at heart,
For the way has been dark,
And so lonely and wild:
O prodigal child!
Come home! oh, come home!

E. H. Gates.

CHAPTER XI.

VILLAGES IN THE LO-NGUONG DISTRICT.

And He went round about the villages teaching.—*St. Mark* vi. 6.

And the common people heard Him gladly.—*St. Mark* xii. 37.

And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.—*Acts* xxviii. 24.

O Tender One! O Mighty One! who never sent away
The sinner or the sufferer, Thou art the same to-day!
The same in love, the same in power,—and Thou art waiting still
To heal the multitudes that come, yea, "whosoever will!"

F. R. Havergal.

"Whosoever will! whosoever will!"
Send the proclamation over vale and hill;
'Tis a loving Father calls the wanderer home:
"Whosoever will may come."

Bliss.

WE have seen that some of the earliest of the Lo-Nguong converts belonged not to the city, but to out-lying villages, and that by their means, in 1868-9, considerable additions were made to the Church from the surrounding neighbourhood. We must now refer more particularly to these villages, and also pay a visit to some others further off, but in the Lo-Nguong district.

KI-PO, SING-CHUO, and SIONG-NANG are situated in a long, narrow valley three or four miles north of Lo-Nguong. "A meandering stream runs through the heart of the valley, which is richly and beautifully cultivated with wheat, barley,

rice, and a large variety of Chinese vegetables. It is also plentifully studded with the plum, the peach, the li-che, the guava, the ling-yian, the orange, and other fruit-trees, which add charm to the plain, and afford covering to the many birds which are heard warbling on their branches." It was at Ki-po, the village of Sing, the old opium-seller, that so many of the Lo-Nguong Christians used to meet during the persecution of 1869-70, while their church in the city was in ruins. Here, too, Mr. Wolfe received so many candidates for baptism just before his departure for England in 1870 (page 118). At the same period he baptized sixteen persons at Sing-Chuo. During his absence the work prospered wonderfully, and on visiting this latter place after his return, in 1873, he had a remarkable reception :—

Almost the entire village turned out to welcome me. I was surrounded with about sixty or seventy Christians, who were either already baptized, or candidates preparing for baptism. On entering the village they conducted me to a large house, where I found upwards of twenty women assembled in a prayer-meeting conducted by Mrs. Lo-Tang, the wife of the Lo-Nguong catechist. It was deeply encouraging to me to witness the anxiety of the men for the instruction of their women in the Christian faith. After this I was led on to another house, which has been given up by the owners as a meeting-place for Christian worship. About three years and a half ago I baptized about sixteen individuals in this little village, and these have ever since been like the leaven working on the mass, till now nearly the whole is leavened with the light of Christian truth. This year it was determined that there should be no idolatrous procession to the village temple, and no offerings to the great idol. When the time arrived for the usual idolatrous carnival, a few of the heathen tried to carry out this time-honoured custom of their religion. Such, however, was the utter indifference manifested by all in the ceremony, that it was a complete failure, and for the first time in the history of Sing-Chuo, an idolatrous service which at one time was bound up with its very existence, and the neglect of which, it was believed, would bring down inevitable calamity and dire misfortune, was suspended, never again, I hope and trust, to be resumed. Now, when I remember that

four years ago, in this very place, the Christians were threatened with death, and many of them received bodily injury because they refused to support or take part in this very ceremony, I cannot help exulting and exclaiming, "What hath God wrought!"

After dinner, which was liberally provided for our whole company by the Christians of Sing-Chuo, the Lo-Nguong catechist and myself, accompanied by two of the Sing-Chuo Christians, visited the village of Siong-Nang, where there are a few Christian families. I was enabled to preach to a very large congregation of heathen men and women, assembled in the large *tieng-chang*, or open enclosure, to listen to the message of God's love. The catechist spoke after me, and many of the people promised to come the following Sabbath to hear the Word of God. After this we visited other places. On one occasion during these visits I met, at the house of one of our members, a company of women, and to them for a long time both the catechist and myself endeavoured to expound the way of salvation. They listened most respectfully to all that we had to say, and I cannot help feeling that our words will not have been spoken in vain to such attentive listeners.

After a hard day's work we returned to Sing-Chuo. After tea we had a very large and important prayer-meeting. The place in which we were assembled could not contain half of those who came together, so that all about the doors and the *tieng-chang* were crowded with people. I am glad to say we have now a school in this village, and the people have themselves earnestly requested that no book but the Bible and Christian books may be taught in it, "for," said they, "our children cannot afford to remain at school longer than two or three years, and we are anxious that this short time should be entirely devoted to Christian learning, so that they may be able at least to read the Word of God in the colloquial."

On my taking leave of them they shouted out, "Sing-sang, you will not forget to pray for Sing-Chuo and for us?"

It is not in Sing-Chuo only that idolatry has received so severe a blow. Perhaps a more striking case still is that of HAI YEU, another village in the same locality. This is described in Mr. Hutchinson's narrative of the tour in 1874. We extract the passage, in which also will be found a further account of Sing-Chuo :—

Reaching Hai Yeu, found a village the majority of residents in which

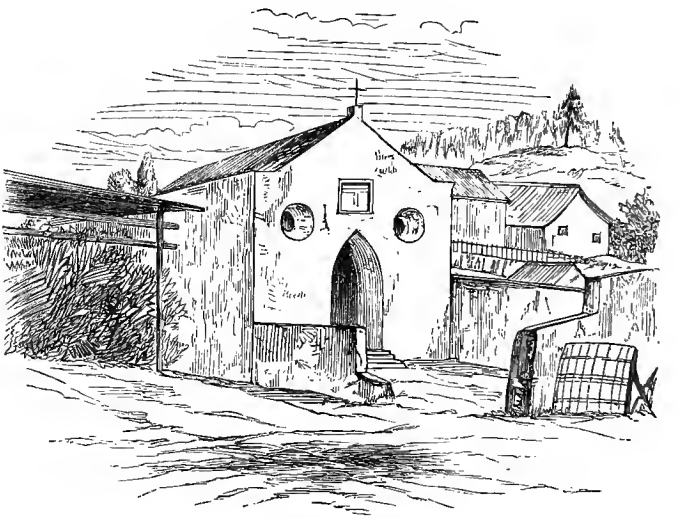
are Christians. The ancestral hall, or public room, is divided between Christians and heathen; the idols removed from the centre place of honour, and the Ten Commandments substituted. The Christians have one side; the heathen the other. This year the annual idolatrous procession was not held, as the minority could not raise funds enough. This is not a station, but one of the Christians acts as reader. He was an opponent until, losing wife and son, he found no comfort in idolatry, and, angry with the idols, sought it of the true Comforter, and sought it not in vain. He can say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, for now have I kept Thy Word." Here there appeared plenty of work for a medical missionary. Wolfe lanced a bad wen, to the great relief of the sufferer, a Christian child. Many had sore legs, and to many we gave quinine to ward off ague. In one Christian's cottage we observed an inscription where the idols used to be placed. It ran thus: "The doctrine teaches benevolence and filial obedience, to observe righteousness and love goodness, and to be faithful to the teaching of the Book." This village has about ninety-six men, of whom twenty-three are baptized, and about thirty more are inquirers or professing Christians, together with their wives and children.

Through beautiful scenery we came to Sing-Chuo, where one of the catechists preached. Once all the people here professed Christianity, but in the persecution five years since many went back; not one of the baptized, however, relapsed. There are now forty-two baptized here. Here we saw a disciple, once a strict Buddhist for forty years, a vegetarian,* who used to beat his believing brother, and show himself in all ways an enemy to Christ, now by God's grace a true believer and warm friend. Now he not only eats the once much-feared meat, but last Christmas trudged all the way to Fuh-Chow, carrying a side of pork as a present to Wolfe (alas! it had become unedible on the way). After acknowledging the welcome gift of a chicken and some eggs, we went on.

Another interesting village is SIU-HUNG, about eight miles from Lo-Nguong, in the direction of A-chia. The work began here at an early period, and was highly encouraging for a while. On the occasion of Mr. Wolfe's visit in 1870, some twenty converts and inquirers subscribed seventeen dollars towards the purchase of a house for a chapel, besides promising mate-

* This is the man whose conversion is mentioned at p. 114.

rials and labour. During his absence from China they were subjected to much trial, and their numbers did not increase. However, in 1874, there were sixteen baptized members, besides twenty-seven candidates, of whom four were received into the Church on the occasion of Mr. Hutchinson's visit. He describes the people as "warm-hearted." He also speaks of



SIU-HUNG CHURCH.

the peculiar beauty of the situation of this village on the hill-side, and of the grandeur of the surrounding scenery. On leaving the village, he and his companions had to put on straw sandals in order to climb the slippery pathway that led over the mountains towards A-chia. In the Report for 1875, Mr. Wolfe says, "At Siu-Hung the little church is literally crowded, and twenty-four have been baptized there during

the year. The members have shown great zeal, which has resulted in bringing many inquirers to the chapel."

TONG-A lies to the south of Lo-Nguong, towards Tang-Iong. This was one of the villages in which the movement of 1869 towards Christianity was very marked. At that time several gave up their idols. All these had first heard the Gospel at Siu-Hung, and thither for a time they used to walk every Sunday for the services. But the persecution of that year checked the movement, and scattered the inquirers. Still, about thirty continued to meet every Sunday for worship, but having no resident teacher, and there being no one in the village able to read, they necessarily knew but little of Christian truth. Some converts from other villages, however, visited them from time to time and encouraged them. In 1870, Mr. Wolfe visited the place, and thus describes what he found there :—

As I approached the village, I was met at the entrance by several of the Christians and others, who conducted me to my lodgings for the night. My coolies were provided for in the next village, where there happened to be a pong-taing (inn). A chicken was at once killed and prepared for my supper, and a great deal of interest and excitement prevailed in the village. As the room which I occupied was too small to hold more than a dozen people, and as more than ten times that number came to see and listen to what I had to tell them, it was agreed that, after supper, we should all adjourn to the large idol hall in the village, where I could explain to them conveniently the religion of Jesus. A table and chair were placed at the upper end of the hall, and an abundance of Chinese candles to give light. At both sides back from the table stood the family idols of Chan Wong, who owned the hall, and the body of the room was densely crowded with the villagers. The Christians who were present gathered round close to me, and we commenced by singing the evening hymn, "Sun of my soul." After a few explanatory remarks on the words of the hymn which we had been singing, I read a part of the third chapter of St. John, and dwelt for a long time on the great love of God as manifested in creation, but especially in redemption. The villagers listened

attentively, and I enjoyed the great privilege of fully and freely expounding to the listening crowds the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. When all was over many of the people expressed their satisfaction, and said Christ was just what they needed, for that the idols were of no use to help them.

I may here remark that these poor Chinese do not worship the idols because they either love or respect them, but because they fear them, and suppose that they can injure them in a variety of ways. They worship them, therefore, to propitiate their anger and avert the supposed consequences of their wrath. It requires very little argument to convince the Chinaman that the idols cannot or will not help him, for he has too often experienced their impotence or unwillingness in this respect. To convince him, however, that the idols cannot harm him is a much more difficult task. Sickness and pain, and disease, and sorrow, and misfortune, and death are the common experience of all; and as these poor people know nothing of God, or of the root of all this physical and moral suffering, they look upon it as the palpable evidence of the anger of their idol-gods, whom they have served in vain for a thousand generations. They do not, indeed, love their idols, and it is hard for them to conceive how any one can love the object of his worship. Their own worship springs from a slavish fear; there is no love, and there cannot be with such objects of worship as they have. It is only Christianity which can teach them to love, and give them an object of worship worthy to be loved and adored. It will rescue them from those miserable fears which have haunted them from infancy for a thousand years. It will enlighten and purify their hearts, which have been hitherto dark and deeply polluted. It will kindle in them that love which has lain dormant in their natures, and draw it out in rapturous adoration to the great Father of all; it will civilise them in the highest sense; it will rescue them from destruction; it will save their souls.

Here, too, however, Mr. Wolfe was disappointed to find, after his absence in England, that the work was at a standstill, indeed that the interest in the truth manifested by the villagers had almost died out; and Tong-A has not since been alluded to.

TING-HAI is another place of remarkable early promise, which has since disappointed the missionary. It lies some

distance south-east of Lo-Nguong, on the coast, and is the centre of a large group of populous villages. This circumstance marked it out as a likely station, and in 1867 Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Cribb went there together, hoping to find an opening. They were, however, unsuccessful; but, not long after, the Gospel reached Ting-hai without their intervention. A native Christian (of what place is not stated), who was a boat-carpenter by trade, went to live there. On Sundays he surprised all about him by ceasing work and retiring to his own house to pray. He frankly explained his reasons for so doing, and tried to induce his comrades to join him. For a while he only met with ridicule, but his quiet persistence so far won the day that two men gave up their idolatry and united with him in the rest and worship of the Lord's Day. He then walked to Lieng-kong, forty miles off, to get some Christian books, and, finding the catechist Tang there, he begged him to visit Ting-hai. Tang did so, with his wife (whose good work elsewhere has been already mentioned), and stayed a fortnight. Crowds assembled to hear him preach, and the women flocked to hear "Mrs. Tang." Subsequently another catechist was sent, and a room was hired as a chapel; but the interest excited proved to be but evanescent. The landlord who let the room turned the catechist out, and no one would take him in. It was therefore resolved to remove him to another village which was asking for a teacher, A-Iong. But on his departure a most curious scene presented itself:—

When it became known that the Mission was to be abandoned, and the catechist to take his departure from Ting-hai the next day, the people with one consent, but especially with the consent of the gentry, made a great demonstration of their real or supposed sorrow at the withdrawal of the Mission from their village. They prepared tables of wines and other delicacies, and placed them alongside the way by which the catechist was to pass to the boat, and, as he passed, the men behind the tables held out cups of wine in their hands and invited him to drink. He was preceded by

men bearing a piece of long red cloth, fringed with white, on which were inscribed characters expressing their respect and regret. Behind him followed men with long strings of powder crackers, the sound of which made the hills ring again. As he was entering the boat they presented him with the long red cloth, and requested him to intercede with me for the re-establishment of the Mission. The people remained on the shore, letting off the crackers as long as the boat remained in sight. They also gave the catechist long strings of these crackers, to make merry on entering his new house at A-long. The principal man in this demonstration, strange to say, was the gentleman who turned us out of his house, and was the chief cause of the abandonment of the Mission. He now came forward and offered the catechist, if he would remain, to let us have the same house for less than half the rent which we had been paying for it. I regret much the catechist did not accept this offer, as it would have tested the sincerity of the whole demonstration; and, besides, have given us another chance of remaining in a place which we were very reluctant to abandon. I have sent another catechist to inquire into the real feeling of the inhabitants of Ting-hai.

This was in 1870; and Ting-hai has not been mentioned since. She "knew not the day of her visitation."

Much more hopeful is OH-IONG, though the work there is of more recent date. Oh-Iong is the name of an extensive plain lying north of the mountainous district around A-chia, and fifteen or twenty miles north-west of Lo-Nguong; and also of a town in the middle of the plain, around which is grouped a large number of populous villages. The inhabitants are a very degraded people. The men are inveterate opium-smokers, "and the effects of this are seen in the deserted ruins of houses once respectable, and the wrecks of humanity hanging about." Infanticide is terribly common, and the paucity of girls among the children, so characteristic of China generally, is especially marked here.

At many places, as we have seen, the beginning of the work has been under circumstances of peculiar interest in some way;

but perhaps no station has so strange a story to start with as Oh-Iong. Ten years ago, Mr. Wolfe, on one of his journeys, saw two men sitting by the road-side, and went and spoke to them of Christ. The men, never having seen a European before, were terribly frightened, and thought it must be the devil. Six years passed away; and there came to their town, which was Oh-Iong, a Christian basket-maker from Lo-Nguong, and lodged in the house of one of them, whose name was Chung-Te. To the astonishment of Chung-Te, the basket-maker talked about the same things that the strange apparition had spoken of six years before; and the heart of the listener soon opened to the story of grace.

Some months afterwards, in the autumn of 1873, he heard that the "foreign devil" was at Lo-Nguong, and started off to see him. Mr. Wolfe's account of the interview we must give unabridged:—

One poor man had started from his home before daybreak, and arrived just after the second Lesson. I was deeply interested in the history of this man's conversion, as he himself related it to me this evening. About seven years ago, he said, as he was travelling from the city of Ning-Taik in company with two of his neighbours, they sat under the shade of a tree by the road-side to rest awhile. They soon were startled by the appearance of a strange object walking towards them. As it approached, they became much alarmed; they had never seen such a thing before in their lives. They asked each other what it was; but while they were thus thinking on the strangeness of the object, it stood before them and, to their great surprise, addressed them, and wished them peace. They had heard of foreign devils in Fuh-Chow, and they now began to think this must be one who stood before them, and they were therefore anxious to get away as soon as possible. The foreign ghost, however, still continued to speak to them, and told them something about a strange religion, and a Saviour who died for the world. But they were determined not to listen to anything that he had to tell them, as they were very much frightened both of him and his words, so they hastened away. But they could not help talking of this strange man as they went along, and wondered what in the world brought him so far away from Fuh-Chow

among their wild mountains. When they arrived at their village of Oh-Iong, they told their neighbours what they had seen on the way. The neighbours told them in return that they, too, had seen the "foreign child," that he had passed through the village about noon, had eaten rice there, and "talked book" to the villagers.

The subject of this story, Ling Chung-Te, however, never could forget the first sight which he had of the "foreign child," and he often wondered in his mind what the strange doctrine (To-li) about a Saviour of mankind could mean. He remained in this manner ignorant for several years. At length a basket-maker came to the village to ply his trade; he was one of the Lo-Nguong Christians, and had been recently brought to the Saviour by his elder brother. This Christian basket-maker spoke to the villagers of Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, and told them to give up the idols, and spoke of the one great God, the heavenly Father. At first he was much abused and persecuted. Chung-Te, however, was among the few who listened to him, and showed anxiety to know more about the Saviour of mankind, and the strange things he first heard from the "foreign child" that frightened him on the Ning-Taik road-side. He now became a constant companion of the Christian basket-maker, and by the grace of God he was thus led to the Saviour, and both himself and his whole house are now worshippers of God and believers in the Saviour of mankind. He told the account as we all sat round the table this evening, and then said to me, "Sing-sang, don't you remember? You are the strange object that met us that day long ago on the road-side. You frightened us so much that we wanted to run away; but when you talked to us and wished us peace, we became curious, and this made us stay and listen to what you said about the Saviour of the world. But we went away and talked much about you, and came to the conclusion that yourself and the object you had in view, whatever that was, must be bad. Forgive me now, Sing-sang, for those bad thoughts. I was then ignorant, but now my eyes have been opened."

We all had a very hearty laugh over this story, especially over the "foreign child" part of it, and at the quaint and original manner in which it was narrated. Besides his present name, Chung-Te, he had from time to time, in order to cheat the devil, assumed three other names. It is supposed that if the evil spirit is not acquainted with the name of his intended victim he can do him no harm. Satan, however, by some means or other discovered each of the three names which this man had successively assumed, and tormented him night and day; in what way I

have not learned. In the selection of the fourth name, it appears he had been more successful, for it completely baffled the ken of Beelzebub to find it out. The result was, of course, freedom from the machinations of the infernal spirit. Such is the superstition and bondage of these poor people. It is a common practice here among them for parents, who have successively lost two or three sons by death, to give a girl's name to the next son, thinking thereby to cheat the devil, who, it seems, according to the notions of the Chinese is not very favourably inclined for the fair sex. In fact, they measure Satan by themselves. A girl is of very little value in their estimation, and they imagine their great enemy thinks so too. I have seen boys grow up almost to the age of manhood in females' dress, and treated in every way by their parents as if they were girls, and all this in order to outwit the devil, and save the boy from his fangs. I rejoice to say that Chung-Te is no longer a slave of Satan, but a free man of the Lord Jesus, and I trust he has received that new name which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it, and the wearer of which can indeed set at defiance all the evil designs and assaults of the devil.

The next morning, Chung-Te returned to his distant village with a few others whom he has induced to come with him to the house of God to learn of Jesus. I hope soon to baptize this interesting man.

Chung-Te was baptized soon afterwards: and for six months he walked eighteen miles every Sunday to join in Christian worship. A catechist was then stationed at Oh-Iong; but great opposition arose, and three houses in succession in which he lived were attacked by the people and destroyed. He thereupon retired; but Oh-Iong was not left without a teacher, for a zealous Christian from Ning-Taik, whom we shall meet again, went over every Sunday, a distance of thirteen miles, to hold service there. In a few months a congregation of thirty were gathered.

A severe trial, followed by a renewed persecution, came upon Chung-Te in August, 1874. His wife, a devout Christian woman, died in child-birth. Her end was a most bright and happy one, and she passed away while her little daughter was singing to her, "For ever with the Lord." Chung-Te was determined that his wife should not be buried with

the customary idolatrous ceremonies; but he carried out this intention in the midst of a great uproar, and after all was over he was seized and severely beaten, and his house would have been pulled down but for the interference of the chief magistrate. He was still a sufferer from the treatment he had received when Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Hutchinson reached Oh-Iong two months later. The latter refers in his journal to the little daughter:—

He told us how his little girl sang "For ever with the Lord" to her mother before she died, and spoke of the happiness of her death. We afterwards saw this little girl of thirteen years of age. She is a great sufferer from scurvy. Wolfe gave her a mixture, and we noticed how she stood quietly holding it, with her eyes closed before drinking, and on inquiry found she was praying, according to her custom, before taking anything. There was something very winning about the frankness and simplicity of that child's trust in God.

The last report of Oh-Iong, for 1875, is as follows:—"Through much persecution and trial, this interesting Church has grown, and has carried the Gospel to many of its surrounding villages. Fifteen members have been added by baptism this year."

Rising seven or eight miles north of Lo-Nguong, a range of wild and lofty mountains divides the valley—or rather, the lower ground broken up into valleys—of which Lo-Nguong is the centre, from another deep valley in which lies the city of Ning-Taik. At the foot of this range, on its southern side, is the little village of Tong-Kieng, where there are two or three Christian families; and in a secluded hollow lying high up in the mountains—so high, indeed, that the place is more than once described as "on the top" of the range—lies another village of great interest, called LANG-KAU. The story of the cross reached this remote spot at an early period, simply by being repeated from mouth to mouth. During

the persecution several of the Lo-Nguong Christians found refuge here, and used to walk down on Sundays to attend the services at Ki-po. The place was visited by Mr. Wolfe in 1870 and in 1873, before and after his visit to England. His description of the ascent is worth quoting:—

The Siu-Hung catechist accompanied me half-way up, and gave a thousand cautions to my bearers to be careful lest they should let me fall and be precipitated down the yawning ravines. I was quite amused with his solicitude, as well as with the answer he received from my bearers. They looked indignant and said, "Of course we will take every care of our own,"—meaning that I was as dear to them as one of their own family. I did not, however, trust myself to their care over these frightful precipices. I preferred walking—no doubt to their great satisfaction. This mountain is very steep, and from the summit there is one of the most magnificent views in the world. The whole valley of Lo-Nguong and Sing-Chuo, and many other valleys running away in all directions between the mountains, are all at once presented to the eye. The natives declare that, on certain days when the atmosphere is clear, the blessed city of Fuh-Chow can be seen from the high peak to the right of the spot on which I stood as they spoke to me. They declare, furthermore, that at the base of this peak there exists a large cave, in which resides the spirit which controls the mountain, and respecting which tradition has handed down many wonderful and remarkable stories. I was almost tempted to have a peep at this extraordinary cave, but the evident horror with which the Chinese looked upon such a proposition showed one the terror with which this place was invested in their eyes. The difficulty and labour, however, in getting up to it had more influence in keeping me from gratifying my curiosity than all the wild stories told by the Chinese about the nature and character of the spirit which resides in it. As we reached the top of the mountain, we met several men carrying shrimps to sell to the villages on the mountain. On entering into conversation with them, I found that they had a tolerably fair idea of the Christian religion, and it convinced me that the Christians in the various villages were not idle in making known their religion, and that a knowledge of Christ as the Saviour was wide-spread in this part of the country. I thanked God and took courage. As we went along we met another man, who shouted out to his fellows before we approached

him, "Here comes the head of the religion!" I spoke to him and told him that Jesus was the Head of the religion; that I was only one of His servants who went about in His name, offering His salvation to the Chinese "without money and without price." He listened, and both he and his companions had an opportunity of hearing about Jesus and His love.

Lang-Kau is one of the places where the converts have suffered not a little, not from the heathen, but from the Romanists. We shall refer again to the Roman Catholic missions in Foh-kien hereafter. Up in the mountains, near Lang-Kau, is a small village inhabited chiefly by Chinese Romanists. On Mr. Wolfe's first visit, they did their utmost to prevent their neighbours of Lang-Kau allowing a Mission to be established among them, and one of them violently interrupted the public preaching. The Gospel, however, as we have seen, was no strange doctrine in these mountains; and although the priest offered, if the catechist were expelled, to restore certain possessions which his party seem to have wrested by somewhat doubtful means from the heathen, the villagers indignantly rejected the proposal, saying that "heavenly doctrine, once discovered and embraced, should not be lightly parted with."

Under these peculiar circumstances, it was most important that converts should not be hastily admitted, and that only those should be received whose lives would afford manifest testimony to the power of pure Christianity. Accordingly Mr. Wolfe declined to baptize any of them at this first visit. But during his absence from China, Mr. Mahood, in two annual reports, made special mention of the growth and consistency of this little Church; and when Mr. Wolfe visited them a second time in 1873, he found forty baptized members, and fifty or sixty catechumens. In the whole village there were only three families unrepresented among the Christians. The converts, though very poor, had already subscribed fifty dollars

in cash and two hundred days' labour towards the building of a little church—"one dollar," Mr. Wolfe explains, "being as much as ten pounds to people at home." The Gospel had spread to other mountain villages; and an interesting account is given of a visit to one of these, LING-IONG, and of an evening at Lang-Kau on the return thither:—

We crossed over the peaks to the right of Lang-Kau, and, after considerable climbing up hills and down steep precipices, we arrived at the village of Ling-Iong. It is impossible to give you any adequate idea of the wild grandeur of this place. As we descended the valley in which Ling-Iong is situated, a certain awe and sense of loneliness crept over me, and I felt I could be an idolater of some genius or spirit if I had not known the great God and Father of us all. I was not, therefore, surprised to meet at every turn the shrine of some idol or other whose spirit is supposed to exercise an influence, either for good or evil, over the destinies of the human beings who inhabit these lonely and almost enchanted dells. We passed the house of a Christian perched up on the side of the hill, and, notwithstanding his shouts and motions of his body for us to come up, we had to decline the pleasure in consequence of the difficulty of elevation which lay between him above and ourselves below. No doubt the poor fellow was much disappointed.

The first house to which we came at the entrance of the valley was that of one of the Christians. This was my first visit to this place, and I had not seen these Christians before, but they welcomed me as warmly as if I had been an old friend. We soon assembled a fair number together, and held a pleasant, and I trust a very profitable, prayer-meeting. It was pleasant to hear the voice of singing from Christian lips in a spot like this. The words and tune of the fine "Old Hundredth" had a peculiar charm as they were sounded forth from the lips of the Chinese, while their echoes seemed to linger among the mountains in this lonely and sequestered spot. After the hymn I read the third chapter of St. John and engaged in prayer. The family and all who were present listened most attentively to the exposition of the Gospel. After this we proceeded farther up this valley, and visited the houses of several others of the Christians, and read and prayed with them also.

After a very pleasant afternoon spent in this valley, we returned to Lang-Kau. After tea the Christians assembled together, half of them in the room which serves as a chapel—for it could hold no more—the rest

in the open yard outside the door. We commenced with a hymn and prayer; afterwards I expounded the parable of the Prodigal Son. There was many a loud and hearty assent as I applied the subject to themselves. They were the lost son, at one time feeding upon the husks of idolatry and sin, but now they were the "found ones," over which the angels and their Father who is in heaven rejoice.

Thus from village to village, throughout almost the whole district, the Christian traveller might now go, without failing in any place to find some families or individuals worshipping the same God, trusting in the same Saviour, inspired with the same principles, looking for the same glory to come. Weak and frail they are, of course; but so is he; and the grace that can keep him steadfast can keep them so too.

Far, far away, like bells at evening pealing,
The voice of Jesus sounds o'er land and sea;
And laden souls, by thousands meekly stealing,
Kind Shepherd, turn their weary steps to Thee.

F. W. Faber.

When He first the work begun
Small and feeble was his day;
Now the word doth swiftly run,
Now it wins its widening way:
More and more it spreads and grows,
Ever mighty to prevail;
Sin's strongholds it now o'erthrows,
Shakes the trembling gates of hell.

Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land:
Lo! the promise of a shower
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour
All the spirit of His love!

C. Wesley.

CHAPTER XII.

A-CHIA.

I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.—*St. Luke* x. 18.

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.—*Habak.* ii. 3.

I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.—*Rev.* iii. 8.

If I find Him, if I follow,
What His guerdon here?
Many a sorrow, many a labour,
Many a tear.

J. M. Neale.

SIXTEEN miles west of Lo-Nguong, nestled in a secluded valley surrounded on all sides by wild and lofty mountains, lies the village of A-chia. The path winds among the hills, through beautiful forest scenery. Firs and bamboos clothe the mountains to their summits; ferns of rare and lovely forms, and bright wild flowers of varied hues, are seen in profusion; and the green tea-shrub is extensively cultivated. A river flows through the valley, and its rapids and falls and overhanging woods down to the water's edge claim the traveller's admiration. The village itself, however, like other Chinese villages, is described as "badly built, badly drained, and

intolerably filthy." The manufacture of paper is carried on in the valley upon a somewhat extensive scale, considerable quantities being sent to Lo-Nguong and Fuh-Chow, and then exported to all parts of China.

The remarkable work that has been going on in this remote mountain district during the last ten years has been almost entirely free from the drawbacks and disappointments which we have had to record of Lo-Nguong and some other places. It began in a very interesting way. Towards the end of the year 1866, Ching-Mi, the Lo-Nguong catechist, made a tour through the surrounding country, accompanied by old Siek and his son Song-to, preaching the Gospel from village to village. In the course of this tour they visited A-chia, and among their hearers there was a young man, whose name was Sia Seu-Ong. The words may truly be applied to him that were written of Lydia, "*whose heart the Lord opened,*" for the single address he listened to on this occasion was made the means of his conversion. He believed the story of grace at once, without question, "and was persuaded of it, and embraced it"; and shortly afterwards, when the catechist paid a second visit to A-chia, he came forward and avowed himself a follower of Jesus. He took a copy of the Scriptures, and then went round the village and invited his neighbours to come and read in it about the Son of God who had come into the world; and the catechist on visiting the place a third time, found that seven other young men had joined him in meeting together to pray to the true God, and in keeping holy the Lord's Day.

The attention of the villagers was now attracted to the little band, and a trying persecution began, before which the seven gave way and deserted their leader. He, however, remained faithful, and became a marked man in consequence. The neighbours taunted him with turning "foreigner"; his

mother dragged him from his room on finding him on his knees in prayer; and his wife bitterly reproached him for his apostacy from the religion of his forefathers. But, as with Luther, opposition only strengthened his purpose; and, that all might know his resolution, he one day brought out his household gods and ancestral tablets, and publicly burnt them in the presence of the horror-stricken villagers. Recovering from their surprise, they rushed upon him, but he escaped and hid himself until their anger had calmed down. It was a terrible trial to him, however, to stand absolutely alone; but one night he was encouraged by a remarkable dream:—

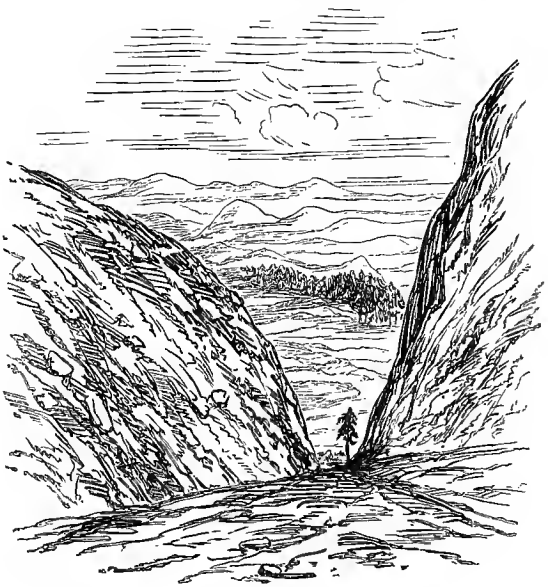
> He dreamed that he was in deadly conflict with the devil, who was pressing him very closely and gaining the victory. Suddenly, as he was about to give up in despair, he heard in the distance the shouts of an immense army, increasing in terribleness as it appeared to approach him. He took courage, for he perceived that the devil evidently got alarmed and relaxed his grasp; and as the mighty host came nearer, the enemy fled in dismay. The army approached, shouting and exulting, and passed on to the village temple and tore it to dust and destroyed all the idols. The leader of the army came near, smiled and said, "Be of good courage; fear not, but believe," and passed away.

Sia Seu-Ong was baptized at Lo-Nguong on the same day with old Siek and his son; and, full of zeal, returned to A-chia to speak more earnestly still of the Saviour under whose banner he had enlisted. His wife now relented; but his mother was more furious than ever, and vowed she would kill the foreigner who had ensnared her son if he dared to come near the village himself.

In the following May Mr. Wolfe, on visiting Lo-Nguong, found the catechist absent at A-chia, where a promising movement had suddenly sprung up. Two days afterwards he himself took, for the first time, the path over the mountains

which has been so frequently traversed since. What he saw on arriving at the village shall be told in his own words :—

Monday.—Started for the village of A-chia. It is situated in a valley in the midst of wild and romantic scenery : all along the road is of the grandest description ; but the many small villages which stud the whole region round remind one that he is travelling, notwithstanding its wildness,



ON THE ROAD TO A-CHIA.

through a thickly-populated country. As I approached A-chia my heart beat light at the prospect of seeing so many who were willing to throw off the trammels of idolatry and embrace the liberty which the Gospel brings to man. As soon as I entered the village, several of the Christians (for such I may call them) came forward to meet me, and expressed the greatest pleasure at seeing me, and at once conducted me to my quarters. This was a large, solitary house, detached from

the village. Here I found about twelve to fourteen persons engaged in reading the Scriptures. The owner of the house, and his entire family, five in number, have believed in Christ, and four of them have entered the Church. At night about forty persons came to listen to the Word of God, and about twenty have entered themselves as candidates for baptism. Among these is the elder of the village, who is a man of great influence in this place. His son also believes, and exhorts others to believe; but he is a literary man, and there are difficulties in his way which I fear as yet he has not sufficient faith to overcome. He is, in fact, the hierogrammatist of the village, and for his duties as president of the religious festivals at the graves of the ancestors he receives yearly about 500 dollars' worth of grain. If he entered the Church he could not, of course, preside at the sacrifices, and of necessity would be compelled to give up this annual reward. As a literary man it is his by right as long as he performs the duties for which it is given. But I do not think at present he is prepared to make such a sacrifice for Christ. He is much like the young scribe who would follow Christ, but when he was called on to give up all, and then follow Christ, he could not make so great a sacrifice, and so went away. This man, however, is very friendly towards Christianity, and says he will enter the Church as soon as the entire village believes, and when he can keep his 500 dollars' worth of grain, and be a Christian.

Tuesday.—I spent part of the morning examining several candidates for baptism, and in the afternoon baptized five men and one lad eighteen years of age. A great many of the villagers flocked to witness the baptismal ceremony, and the large public hall was not able to contain them. The place was appropriately arranged for the occasion, and everybody came in his best dress. The six candidates were seated on a long form in front of the little table, behind which I was located. I was supported on my right by my faithful brother Ching-Mi, the catechist, whose countenance showed the joy of his soul at this interesting meeting. On my left was seated the literary man, entering heartily into the whole affair. Not far off, to the right, was his father, the elder of the village, joining in the prayers, and encouraging by his presence and his words all who were present to believe. Immediately round the candidates were the twenty or thirty inquirers, who are themselves hoping soon to take the same solemn vows upon them. The outer circle was composed of those who had not yet given in their names as inquirers or learners, but who look with a friendly eye on the movement, and listen earnestly

to the Word of God. One of those who were baptized lives in a village about thirteen miles distant from A-chia: thither also he has carried the light, and there, too, there are some beginning to learn the truth.

The lad who was baptized to-day has made a very deep impression on my own mind. In the morning I had decided to put off his baptism to my next visit. When he was told of my intention he burst into tears, and earnestly implored me not to refuse him admission into the Church of Jesus Christ, and then before the whole multitude gave a most clear account of his faith in Christ, and his reasons why he wished to be baptized. The people were moved at the lad's earnest appeal to me. He took me by the hand and said, "Sing-sang, I do verily believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, my Redeemer, who shed His blood for me upon the cross to save my soul, and to cleanse me from sin; why do you refuse to baptize me?" The tears rushed to my own eyes at this earnest appeal, but they were tears of joy at this triumph of faith. "Yes," I said, "I will baptize you if your father give his consent." At this the lad bounded across the valley, and in a quarter of an hour returned with his father, who gave his full consent, and furthermore expressed his great delight that his boy should be brought under the influence of a religion which was so holy and so good. This man himself is not far from the kingdom of God.

After the baptisms were over I walked across the valley to the elder's house, and was detained there for dinner. It is a large establishment, and must have cost over 7,000 dollars to build it. I had a long talk with the old man and his son about the importance of believing at once in Jesus. The elder, I am persuaded, feels the force of the truth, but the son is too much bound by the world, and he cannot get free. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!"

After dinner visited the village; all seemed delighted to see me. Was invited to visit and pray with a poor man, who lay afflicted with paralysis. He is very dark, but has been taught something of Jesus. He often uttered the sacred name, and said, "If Jesus can save me He will, and that will be well; if not, there is no help for it." I told him that Jesus was willing and able, and it only wanted the willing mind in us to receive the greatest blessings from Him. He still doubted, and I knelt down and prayed. I could not remain long; the dirt and bad smells were horrible. The catechist goes to see him three times a week, and I have great hopes that his soul will receive the light.

Leaving the poor afflicted house, I was invited to the next, and there

I found the woman who had threatened to kill me, some four months ago, if I came to the village, preparing eggs and rice and vermicelli for me to eat. I approached the house with a little curiosity, but my curiosity was turned into surprise and thankfulness at the change which has taken place in this woman's feelings towards the messenger of Christ. Her house from henceforth is to be the chapel and the school, and the Christian meeting-place for the native village. Her son was the first Christian in this place. I cannot but hope that the mother, who has been the object of so many prayers, will soon be called into the fold of Christ.

Wednesday.—Spent the day in visiting many of the surrounding villages. Found some inquirers in one large village, the friends of one of the Christians. In this village I was deeply interested with all that I was permitted to see and take part in, and my impression is that a real work of the Spirit is going forward among this people.

In October Mr. Wolfe again visited A-chia, and baptized ten persons, some of whom belonged to neighbouring villages. The scene presented, however, was different from that on a former occasion. The people generally showed no sympathy, and the head-men kept aloof. The fact was that in the interval a persecution had arisen, and the converts had been subjected to ill-treatment and annoyance of various kinds. But so much the greater cause for thankfulness was it that, under these circumstances, some were found bold enough to take the vows of Christ upon them. Mr. Wolfe preached on the occasion from Rom. xii. 19—21: "Avenge not yourselves," &c.; and the smiles of assent on every countenance showed how truly they understood the forgiving spirit to which he was exhorting them. The literary graduate mentioned in the last extract continued to side with the Christians, to do his best to quiet their opponents, and to come to church; but beyond that he would not go.

A little mission school had been opened in A-chia; but in consequence of the opposition, and a convert at another village in the valley having offered the use of his house to hold

it in, it was removed thither. Not, however, before it had borne fruit in the conversion of a scholar, who with his mother was baptized on this occasion :—

Two of those baptized on Sunday are a mother and her son—a widow and an orphan. The boy is about twelve years old. He was one of our day scholars in the A-chia school. The simple lessons of Christian truth which he learned from the catechist, when he went home at night he repeated to his widowed mother. She listened to her child with deep interest, to the wonderful things which he told her of an Almighty Saviour, in his own simple words. She was determined to know more about this Saviour from the catechist. She overcame the delicacy of her sex, and came to the chapel, and became a learner of the truth. At length, by God's grace, she made up her mind to become a Christian, though to do so she knew would expose her to much trial, and probably the loss of all her earthly goods. But she was determined in the course she had commenced, and wished her little boy, who was the means of bringing her to Christ, to enter the Church of Christ with her on the first opportunity. Accordingly I had the great privilege of receiving them both, with eight others, into the communion of the visible Church. I was much pleased with the reason she gave, and the answers to my questions.

The very next day the storm raged against her. Her friends threatened to destroy her, and pull down her house, and despoil her of her property, on which she and her orphaned boy depended for their subsistence. I believe my presence in the village, though I was very ill, and confined to bed, saved her from personal violence for the time. As soon as I took my departure, however, they carried out their threats, confined her a prisoner in her own house, forbade her seeing any of the Christians, and threatened to do violence to any of them who dared to come to her. In addition, they compelled the poor boy to bow down to the idols, and burn incense to the gods, the poor little fellow crying and protesting the whole time that he did not believe in them; that he only believed in Jesus.

Before long, the persecution spread to the other villages. The Christians were accused of poisoning the wells, which was at once made an excuse for acts of violence. One man, named Cho-seng-hing, who dwelt in the little village of San-

kaik-iong, was beaten and forced to flee for his life, while his home was plundered. As this was a gross case, and notorious in the neighbourhood, Mr. Wolfe resolved to make an example of it, and appeal to the British Consul. The only person who deprecated his doing so was the sufferer himself. "He had not a word to say against his persecutors, but prayed earnestly for them. When I proposed demanding that they should be punished, he was the only one to plead for them." Apparently he had not forgotten the sermon of the previous October. It was necessary, however, to stop such unprovoked outrages; and on the Consul complaining to the Fuh-Chow authorities, the following proclamation was issued by the chief magistrate of Lo-Nguong:—

(*Translation.*)

LUH, through the bounty of H.I. Majesty, promoted to the rank of Chief Magistrate of a Chow department, once honoured for his merits in military affairs, and twice for his merits in other important affairs, now, in the upright Hall, as temporary Magistrate of the Lo-yuen (Lo-nguong) Heen, do issue this Proclamation—

ING, General of the forces and Acting Viceroy (of the two Provinces), made the following communication to the Board for Foreign Affairs, and commanded attention. "Mr. Sinclair, H.B.M. Consul at Foo-chow-foo, made known to me that he had received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Wolfe, of the English Mission, from the village A-chia, in the Lo-yuen Heen, in which letter Mr. Wolfe complains that in the village of San-kaik-iong a Christian, whose name is Cho-seng-hing, on the fourteenth day of the second moon, was severely beaten and wounded by Cho-hing-ku and others, who also refused to pay to Cho-seng-hing the Christian money which they justly owed him; and all this because he became a Christian. I have carefully observed this matter. Mr. Wolfe further complains, in a previous letter, that on a former occasion (first moon), at the same village, the wicked party of Cho-ku-kuang had attempted to prevent Cho-seng-hing from embracing the (Christian) religion, and, with this object, collected a large body of men, and forcibly took away his property, and seriously injured his person. Mr. Wolfe requests that the officer of the

district shall examine into this matter, and punish the offenders." The Board for Foreign Affairs have, according to the commands of the Viceroy, sent orders to me (Lo-yuen Magistrate) to examine this matter carefully, and punish the offenders; and furthermore to issue a prohibitory Proclamation. I therefore have sent and apprehended the wicked offenders, and now issue this second Proclamation, that all the people, whether living in the city or in the country, may know the will and obey the commands of the Governor-General. If Mr. Wolfe comes into any part of this district preaching the doctrines of Christianity, let no one attempt to molest him. If any of my good people desire to embrace these doctrines, let no one dare to hinder them or interfere with them on this account, that all may live in harmony and peace together. If, however, any one is found to disobey these my commands, I will at once have the offender apprehended, and examined in my presence, and will have him punished according to the extreme rigour of the law.

Let no one disobey this.

Tung-Te, 7th year, 4th month, 7th day.

(April 29th, 1868.)

Sixteen of the converts from A-chia and San-kaik-iong were confirmed at Lo-Nguong by Bishop Alford in May, 1868, on the occasion already more than once mentioned. On his second tour, three years later, he visited A-chia itself, and confirmed ten more. His return at that date, 1871, gave thirty-five baptized members of the Church at this station, including five children. His account of A-chia is as follows :—

We were off for A-chia—sixteen miles distant. The path is very hilly, and we had to walk most of the way. The scenery is really grand. The mountains are lofty, but want the Alpine green; and no snow mountains are to be seen. It became very dark before we reached A-chia. The village lies in a dell very difficult to find. But, as we approached, the catechist and his friends came to meet us with flaring bamboo torches; and all around us, as we neared the mission-house, torches threw out a bright light to guide our steps. The house is a "shanty," built of wood, very like a Swiss herdsman's on the Alps. The room was very cold, the night air finding its way through the open windows, which had no shutters. Two

little rooms were partitioned off, where we three slept. The large room was soon pretty full of Chinese farmers and labourers, who favoured us with close examination and particular attention. After a cup of tea, of which we stood much in need, the missionary and catechist arranged the room for service, and with the aid of Mr. Cribb's good lamp and numerous Chinese lanterns we made a fair chapel of it, with "table" and forms conveniently arranged. Ten men were presented by the catechist, having been examined and approved as to knowledge and character and conduct by Mr. Cribb. They seemed very sincere. I spoke to them with all the force and solemnity I could throw into the discourse. They would not, they said, go back to idols; they would serve the Lord Jesus Christ; they would try and keep His commandments; and on these professions they were confirmed. It was long after service before they seemed inclined to depart, and at length we had to seek refuge in our sleeping cabins, taking our supper there, and getting to bed the best way we could.

Scarcely any details of the work at A-chia have been given subsequent to the foregoing. But Mr. Hutchinson's narrative of his visit to the place in the course of his tour with Mr. Wolfe, in the autumn of 1874, is interesting and encouraging. It will be noticed that the literary graduate, A Sia, still shrank from baptism—at least if administered in his own village—although avowing himself a Christian. We may add that the site of the new church was presented by him. The allusions to the first convert, and his dream, and to Cho or Chuo, the persecuted convert at San-kaik-iong, both of them now catechists in other parts of the province, will also be observed:—

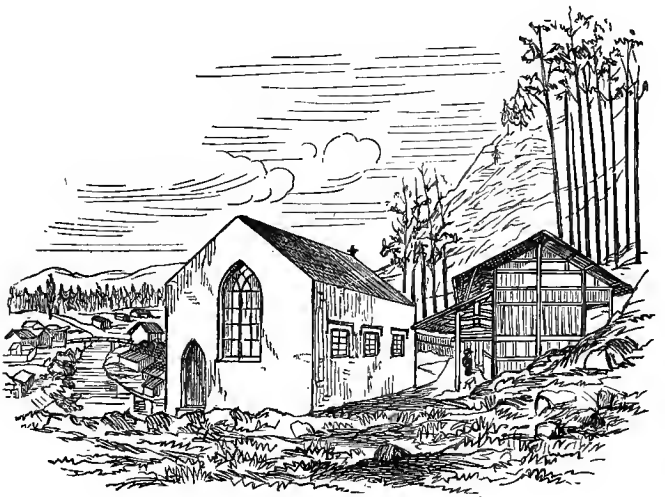
Through fields of waving grain ready for the sickle, we reached A-chia. . . . .

Crossing a beautiful river, which strongly reminds one of the Eden and Corby woods near Carlisle, we were invited to spend the night at the house of A Sia, a military Kujin,* a Christian, although not yet baptized. We had the rooms belonging to the eldest son and his teacher apportioned to us for the night. When our evening meal was ready, the whole family came forward to see us eat, the mandarin and his sons on

* *Ku-jin* is the name of the second literary degree. See page 26.

one side, and the ladies of the family on the other. No glass is used in the windows of a house like this, which has cost £2,000 in building—a large sum in China. The windows were of open carved woodwork, in very chaste designs, over which, in winter, thin white paper is pasted.

Wednesday.—Early as we awoke, the family were up before us, peering curiously in at us, and soon the male branches were in our rooms asking after our health, &c. Washing and dressing are matters of difficulty under such circumstances; but by various manœuvres we at last



A-CHIA.—THE CHURCH AND CATECHIST'S HOUSE.

managed to make our appearance in the hall, where breakfast awaited us. Thence to the church, which is rapidly approaching completion—a fine building to seat 300. Originally Wolfe gave 400 dollars towards it, the people giving 100 dollars; they have since built a catechist's house, value 400 dollars, and have given more than 500 dollars in material and labour themselves. This shows the value they place upon the means of grace and united worship. The parsonage is the first that the Chinese have built entirely themselves, without foreign aid. It is handsomely built, roomy, and substantial.

There are here forty adult Christian men, besides women and children. All that we saw is the result of work during the last eight years. A catechist preached here—the Lord opened the heart of one man—that brought about the opening of a station.

In the hall the catechist preached to a small congregation—A Sia sitting by in the place of honour. He intends to be called Sin Yik, or "One faith," or the "Unity of faith," when he is baptized.

The village contains about 700 inhabitants, and is the centre of a group of little villages. As we go round and see the Christians in their homes, we notice how much happier and open-faced they look than the heathen—more self-reliant and intelligent. The children are not so fearful and shy as the heathen children. "Truly godliness is profitable for all things"; it certainly will much improve the externals of this interesting people.

We visited the mother of the first convert, and had prayer in her house, and saw the loft which sheltered the first congregation for five years, until the heathen shareholders claimed it. It was wonderful to look away from the dark, dirty upper room, and see across the river the new church rising in its beauty on the very spot dreamt of seven years since by the first convert, who is now a catechist at Ang-Iong.

After visiting some other Christians, and seeing the process of paper-making, we returned to A Sia's house—the river continually claiming our admiration for its rapids and falls and overhanging woods down to the water's edge. The valley, full of rice-fields, belongs chiefly to A Sia. He has been over twice to Fuh-Chow to ask for baptism, but it is felt important that the general rule be observed in his case, viz., to administer that sacrament in the church of his native place, in the presence of all who have known the candidate; thus he does indeed confess Christ before men. We could not but observe the total absence of idols from his large and beautiful house. Ere we left, he asked for quinine, which is highly valued; and after exchanging the final adieus, he came up and said to me quite quietly and earnestly, "Sing-sang, I pray Shang Ti [*i.e.*, God] to preserve and bless you!"

As we crossed the fields, some labourers came running up to offer tea out of a large pewter teapot, to be drunk from the spout, which we were obliged to decline. We soon reached Sang-kaik-iong, or the "Three-Horned Expanse," an out-station of A-chia. The people are much poorer than those in A-chia; they suffer much from ague, and quinine was greatly in demand. The church here is held in the upper room of a

house more than 500 years old. It was the first house built in the village, and is in possession of the descendants of the original possessors, by name Chuo. The present owner was the first Christian in the village; he became a colporteur, not being able to read; in three years, however, he learnt, and is now the catechist at Siu Chuo. Whilst here, a heathen man arrived as a messenger from the village of Pi-taik-iong, about two miles off, to ask that a catechist might be sent there to teach the people the doctrine. There are about 500 people in that village. Wolfe hopes shortly to be able to send them a teacher. This is not the first application they have made, and the supply of discreet men available is very small.

We called in on some of the Christians, and then ascended the hill behind the village, whence we could see many smaller valleys opening out into this, which the catechist told us were full of villages, large and small. Meeting a man, Wolfe began talking. Whence was he? A village thirty miles away from all mission stations; yet he had heard of Christ, and knew something about the doctrine. Thus the leaven is spreading quietly and unsuspectedly.

Returned to our venerable but dirty quarters. The people were very anxious to do all they could; they swept the table before dinner with a large old broom. Whilst eating, the room gradually filled, and so great at last was the crowd, that, for fear of the house giving way, we adjourned, at the request of the whole village, to the ancestral hall. About thirty of the people are believers, twelve being baptized already; four candidates were presented for baptism, one of whom was put back for further instruction. Evening prayer was then proceeded with, and one man, two women, and three children were baptized.

In the Report for 1875 it is stated that A-chia and the surrounding villages have made considerable advance. One village five miles off, called Iong-Tung, is particularly mentioned as bidding fair to outstrip the mother Church. The Gospel was brought there by one of the inhabitants, who heard it himself, and was baptized, at A-chia. He died last year "in a good old age, but not before he had seen a goodly number of his neighbours deeply interested in Christ." Thirty-five persons now assemble every Sunday for united worship in the house of one of their number, who was formerly a bitter

enemy of Christianity. "Himself and his entire family are now apparently devoted Christians."

Thus the vision of the first A-chia convert, Sia Seu-Ong, though not fulfilled as regards the people generally—for this the time is perhaps not yet—has come to pass again and again in individual souls turned "from the power of Satan unto God." And not so in the valley of A-chia only. That first convert himself is now the catechist at Ang-Iong, a village in the Ku-Cheng district, which we shall visit by-and-by; and there he has a flock of some 200 Chinese Christians. It is hoped that he will ere long be presented to Bishop Burdon for ordination. The message heard in his memorable dream may well be still our watchword, "Be of good courage; fear not, but believe."

"Lord, I will follow Thee where'er Thou goest!"
So speaks the young heart, burning with its love,
Fearing no future, knowing that Thou knowest
All it must meet with ere it win above.

"Lord, keep me following!"—soon the voice is altered,
The way seems rougher than at first we thought;
Our faith has wavered, and our steps have faltered,
The vision bright has dimmed which first we sought.

"My followers bear the cross, for I have borne it;
'is no light symbol 'broidered on a sleeve,
But heavy to the bearer: none may scorn it,
Or lay it by at pleasure, who receive.

"But they who bear it well shall feel their burden
Become a blessing, ere life's day go down;
Itself shall be its bearer's holiest guerdon,
Till, at the close, he change it for a crown."

Lord, help us bear it: we, Thy word obeying,
Carry our crosses, following after Thee;
Cheer us if drooping, rouse us when delaying,
And bring us safely where no cross shall be.

C. A. Goodhart.

CHAPTER XIII.

NING-TAIK.

I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.—*Rev.* ii. 13.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.—*Rev.* ii. 10.

Though in affliction's furnace tried,
Unhurt on snares and death I'll tread;
Though sin assail, and hell, thrown wide,
Pour all its flames upon my head,
Like Moses' bush, I'll mount the higher,
And flourish unconsumed in fire.

C. Wesley.

NING-TAIK (*i.e.*, Peace and Virtue) is a large and important *hien* city, some five and twenty miles north-west of Lo-Nguong, on the coast, an arm of the sea running up to the walls. The valley in which it is situated is bounded on the south by the range of mountains in an upland valley of which we have already found the village of Lang-Kau. The scene presented to the eye as the topmost ridge is reached from the south is described as magnificent. "The view," writes Mr. Wolfe, "as we descend is literally enchanting. Lofty peaks and yawning chasms meet the eye on every side. Trees and flowering shrubs are scattered plentifully all around, while the deep blue

sea placidly reposes beneath us, like a silvery expanse spreading away in the distance, and glittering in the morning sun." And Mr. Hutchinson says, "The path down consists of narrow irregular stone steps, very uneven and slippery. A false step might send one to the bottom of precipices which open below to the depth of a thousand feet or more. There are more than two miles of these steps, and from top to bottom rise lofty *arbor vitæ* trees, forming a magnificent descending avenue. Below lay the city, with its crowded dwellings and thousands of inhabitants, surrounded by quaint battlemented walls, up to which flowed the sea, studded with numerous islands. The general aspect reminded one of Ilfracombe on a large scale."

The account of Mr. Wolfe's first visit to Ning-Taik, in January, 1866, is interesting:—

Jan. 25.—Started early for the city of Ning-Taik in the prefecture of Hok-ning. The day was very fine, and so I enjoyed the walk and ride in a sedan chair very much. The scenery is very grand, hill and vale all the way on. Passed through a few small villages, and saw several large ones in the distance in valleys as we went along. Saw one perched upon the top of a hill, about 600 or 700 houses. Depressed with a sense of the weakness of our Mission, of my own feebleness, and of the apathy of the Church at home. Felt very lonely in the midst of these wild mountains, but soon felt happy when I thought of the presence of God, and meditated on my Master's love.

We arrived early at the top of the "Snow Mountain," so called from the appearance it presents when covered with snow. At the top of this hill the city of Ning-Taik suddenly appears to view. To me it appeared rather interesting, seated as it is, like most other Chinese cities that I have seen, in a valley surrounded by mountains, but having this advantage, that the sea runs up to its walls, bearing large trading boats to its very gates. I sat for a while on the top of Snow Mountain, contemplating the scenery on every side; the city in the valley, the mountains rising high on every side, the sea stretching off in the distance, and the boats spreading their sails before the breeze as they bore their freights to the habitation of man. It was grand beyond description. I looked upon the city with deep interest. Will it receive the messengers

of Christ who have now come to it for the first time? Its dark roofs were to me a striking picture of the moral darkness of its people, and, on the spot where I stood, I prayed the great Father of the human family to enlighten His creatures with the light of life, and dispose the people of Ning-Taik to receive Jesus as their deliverer. There were at that moment two earnest Christian men (the two Native brethren I had sent on) preaching Jesus to the inhabitants, and requesting them to give a place for the preaching of the Gospel of peace.

I had now to descend this steep mountain at least two miles down some stone steps. The descent is most wearying to the body. It took me about two hours to descend. We arrived in the city about dark. As I entered, the people had a huge image of the idol called "mother," before which they were prostrating themselves. My sudden appearance rather disconcerted them. They laughed, and said, "Oh, there is the foreign child coming; come and let us have a look." One old man came forward and said, "Welcome, stranger; from whence are you come?" "From the provincial city," I replied. "I hope elder brother is well." "What brought you here, stranger?" said the old man. "I am come to tell the people of this city some good news." "We have heard this good news in the provincial city some twenty years ago; has nobody come here to tell it yet?" The people's attention was excited. I told them of Jesus. They were disappointed and said, "We have not heard," and marched away to their idol mother. Went in search of a lodging, and found what proved a very noisy one all night. Walked in the city; saw Ching-Mi, whom I sent on the day before, in a barber's shop, getting his beard off. He accompanied me back to my lodgings. Cheng-seng, who was all day long killing himself preaching in the streets, heard of my arrival, and came too. For the first time there was a small company of Christians in this heathen city. May we not hope it was the beginning of great things for Ning-Taik? Spent the whole of next day looking out for a house, but failed to rent one. Left disheartened and discouraged.

For some years Ning-Taik appeared the most hopeless spot in the whole Mission. In 1869, the report is, "The night of toil still continues, without one bright star to encourage the lonely catechist." There was some thought of abandoning it, but it had been found a good centre, and from it the Gospel

had reached some remote mountain villages, so it was spared for awhile. But the seed sown was not lost. Mr. Hutchinson visited the place in the course of his tour in 1874, and what did he find? "Eleven baptized already, and forty-six attending regularly as candidates for baptism"; and fifteen of the candidates were baptized on that occasion. The following year Mr. Wolfe wrote: "The little chapel at Ning-Taik, which for years seemed the very picture of desolation and spiritual barrenness, has at length become too strait by reason of the numbers who flock to it to worship God and learn His precious truth"; and his last report tells of that true test of success, persecution, the Christians having been beaten, and their houses broken down, "yet not one has denied the faith." But how came all this about? The story gives us a hint of the wonderful workings of Providence in all these matters. The temporary Mission house was obtained some eight years ago, as well as three or four others in different stations, through the influence of a tea-merchant at Lo-Nguong—not himself a Christian, but out of friendship more or less disinterested to foreigners. The owner of the house, hating Christians, tried, as soon as he found out the object for which it was hired, to turn out the catechist; but Mr. Wolfe, having the deeds, determined to keep the place. A new catechist came; he influenced the landlord; by God's grace the landlord became a believer; he was the first baptized at Ning-Taik four years since, and has since brought others to the faith by going out to Ni-Tu and other places preaching. Two years ago he covered-in the yard at the back of the house to give increased room for services, &c., without making any extra charge.

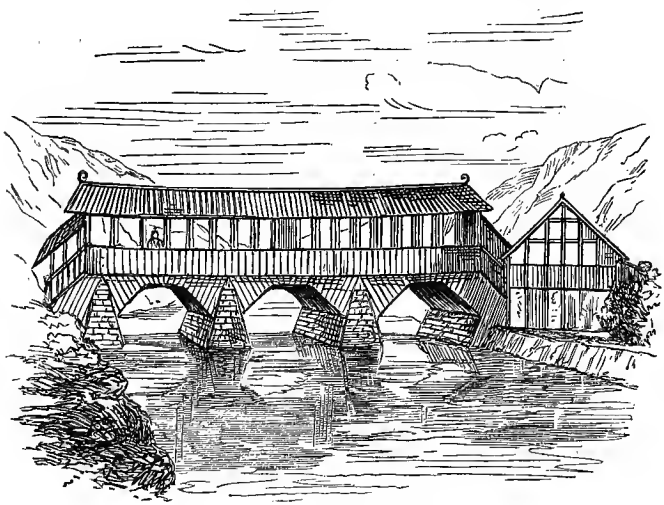
Mr. Hutchinson's account of his visit gives much interesting information:—

It was necessary that we should see the mandarin here; so rubbing off our travel-stains, we entered the Yamun. Last year a proclamation

had been issued which prevented the mob destroying the preaching place; but severe persecution has marked the present year. We were admitted at once, tea prepared, and the officer, in full dress, begged us to be seated—a fine military-looking man, prompt and dignified in his speech, attended by a youth as pipe-bearer, a little elderly man, his secretary, and a tall, thin, supple rascal, the head of the runners, who began to act as interpreter. The mandarins coming from other provinces only use the Court dialect. This head runner was the greatest persecutor—had robbed two Christians of land and boats, and imprisoned them with impunity. Of course he misinterpreted on both sides; but, fortunately, we had an interpreter with us, a Christian tradesman of the place. This altered matters. The mandarin said, truly, he knew nothing of the matter, promised to set matters right, and to issue a proclamation that the Christians were not to be molested on account of their creed; offered us tea, and then bowed us out through four doors, the runner meanwhile trying to keep him back from showing us courtesy—"Don't you bow them out;" but "No," said the mandarin, "I must." I was much interested at observing the boldness of the Christian. "Are *you* a Christian?" asked the mandarin. "I am," said he distinctly; and the officer bowed. On returning, found an old man, over seventy years of age, who had come from a village near the top of the mountains to see us. He had never seen a European before. He seemed almost too old to understand things, but said, "I do believe" in reply to most questions. We next visited the gentleman's houses and ground which are being privately offered us for a church, in the best part of the city, right amongst the reading men; it will be a great advantage to secure such a site, and the buildings are good, and in good condition. It will be handy for all who at present come, and also enable the better class of inquirers to come, without the publicity which now attends their coming to a low neighbourhood. If we succeed in securing this, may the work be more permanent than that of the Nestorians, who once had a church in the city, the site of which we were shown; it is now used as a barrack.

Passed through the city to a Christian's house outside the north gate. Wolfe preached, also the catechist, to a large audience. The catechist used a peculiarly Chinese illustration: "You say there is a spirit inside the idol; well, are there not very often rats living inside the idol?" "Yes." "Now, if I die, the spirit leaves my body, and living things soon swarm inside; that is a proof there is no spirit in me?" "Yes." "Well,

then, the rats in the idol show there is no spirit within either!" The people laughed heartily. Back into city to visit, by invitation, the gentleman owning the property for sale. After tea his wives and children came to see us. Poor things! they screamed with delight on seeing a watch and its works, and hearing it tick. The catechist here, Ting Sing Ki, is a noble-looking fellow; tall, with aquiline nose, and fine frank countenance—a man calculated at once to impress a stranger favourably. Wolfe speaks highly of him. Walking out with him, he



BRIDGE NEAR NING-TAIK.

pointed out what the Chinese think a great curiosity—a tablet erected by a widow to the memory of her deceased noble husband about one hundred years since. It was headed "Everlasting Peace," and told how he left in his will a sufficient sum to enable every inhabitant of the city to bury his relatives and ancestors, whose coffins were still remaining above ground, as the city was full of dead houses. The heading, "Everlasting Peace," made us feel thankful that now the time had come when the people of Ning-Taik might know for themselves what those words mean from the lips of the heralds of the Prince of Peace.

Noticed much indigo growing in this neighbourhood, and examined the pits in which it is prepared.

Sunday, October 18th.—The day's services began soon after ten, with the examination of seventeen candidates for baptism, fifteen men and two women. Whilst this was going on, one could not but observe the difficulties of a decent and orderly service in an ordinary Chinese house. The mud floor, of course, can never be washed, and is very rarely swept; fowls were running about under the seats, pecking here and there; dogs sniff round; in rear was the cooking stove; and a half-prepared fowl, and other requirements for mid-day meal, were hung up in full view. Of course the congregation would not mind these things, but then they have to be taught the concomitants of reverence. They themselves wish for a church; they say the doctrine is worthy of the finest. Roman Catholics, of whom there are many in the vicinity, have had fine churches for 300 years, and idolaters have grand temples; we ought to show our feelings of reverence by setting apart our best for the Saviour. About sixty men and a few women formed our congregation, most with marks of hard toil on their seamed and wrinkled weather-beaten faces; young men were there also with fine frank faces, and in somewhat smarter clothes, but most of them are agricultural labourers, and but few can read. We could but notice the same patient care in the individual examination of the candidates, two of whom were put back for a time. Besides these there were five from Ni-Tu station, who will be baptized there on the next visit. One of the accepted candidates was a dwarf with a very large head. One young man being asked, "Do you love the Saviour?" replied humbly and earnestly, "I do; I cling to Him; I am very, very close to Him." Those already baptized having signified their hearty assent to the admission of the new brethren into the Church, the service proceeded. We observed, in the case of women, the taking by the hand is omitted in deference to Chinese ideas of morality. After the sermon it was our privilege to unite with twelve Chinese brethren in receiving the Lord's Supper, administered for the first time in this city. We had enjoyed a very happy service under rather difficult circumstances. Noticed the landlord reproving a man for praying with his queue rolled up, it being as irreverent in Chinese eyes as wearing the hat would be in ours. Entered a monastery, commanding lovely views of city and bay. Found three lazy priests, ignorant and conceited. Like the monks of old, these Buddhist monks have a keen eye for the prettiest spot in choosing a location.

The larger premises within the city, mentioned in this extract as being sought for the use of the Mission, have since been secured, and are now occupied.

The village of NI-TU, mentioned above, is situated on the sea-shore, south of Ning-Taik, and just at the foot of the mountains. It is a place of some importance as the centre of a considerable population scattered along the coast. The Gospel first spread thither from Lang-Kau, and in 1873 there were ten Christians. It was at Ni-Tu that the proto-martyr of the Fuh-Kien Mission laid down his life, as we shall see directly.

Another station in the Ning-Taik district is CHEK-TU. It was only opened in 1875, yet the same letter from Mr. Wolfe that reports this fact gives a deeply interesting account of the first-fruits of the work :—

At Chek-Tu, one of the newly-opened stations, and where considerable interest has been awakened, the persecution raged, and still rages, most furiously. On the occasion of my visit to this place in November last I baptized seven deeply-interesting men, who made an open confession of their faith in Christ, surrounded by a mob, which literally howled for their death. This mob threatened to pull down the chapel on the occasion, and one of them struck myself a severe blow. A friendly heathen warned the catechist of a design on the part of the gentry to come and pull me out of the chapel at night and set fire to the house. This caused us some little anxiety, but we knelt down and committed ourselves to the care of our heavenly Father, and then laid down calmly and enjoyed a peaceful sleep.

One of those whom I baptized on that evening made a very deep impression on my mind. He was eighty years old, and perfectly blind. He showed a marvellously clear perception of the atonement by Jesus. He stood up in the congregation, and, leaning upon his staff, related the history of his conversion to Christ. It was deeply affecting. He was, as he said, at the age of thirty a devout worshipper of the idols, but he soon found out their worthlessness, and abandoned them for ever. For many years he worshipped nothing, but was in agony to know what to worship. He then betook himself to worship the rising sun, but this brought no peace to his heart. He then worshipped the moon and stars, but peace

did not come; at length, in the deepest distress, he gave up the worship of the sun and moon, and cried for the true God. Just at this crisis we opened our chapel in the village, and the old man heard the catechist preach about Jesus, and believed at once with his whole heart. "Now," he said to me on the occasion of his baptism, "I can die in peace; I have found a Saviour." I am expecting great things in this village.

The persecution at Chek-Tu has not diminished in bitterness since then. In the early part of 1876, the gentry of the place seized the Mission chapel for the purpose of holding in it an idolatrous service on the occasion of the death of the wife of one of them, and on the Christians resisting they were beaten and their books destroyed. The gentry claimed that the chapel was their property, notwithstanding that the lease was in Mr. Wolfe's possession. The magistrate was appealed to, but instead of seeing justice done, he set the local police to annoy the Christians.

Encouraged by the impunity with which the Christians were ill-treated at Chek-Tu, the gentry of Ni-Tu determined to follow so excellent an example :—

A man died of fever, and the gentry raised the cry that these Christians were the cause of this fever, and that the idols were angry. On Sunday morning, as the Christians were quietly engaged in worship, the leading gentry, with the official *Te-po* beating his official gong, and followed by a mob, proceeded to the chapel, dragged the Christians forth, and beat them most violently, and threatened to kill them unless they renounced their faith and return to the worship of idols. The Christians, however, returned again in the afternoon to their usual worship, when they were again dragged forth and beaten, and one of their number murdered on the spot. Three others are in a rather precarious condition, but it is hoped that they will recover. The *Ning-Taik* magistrate was called on by the mother and son of the murdered Christian to take notice of the murder, and hold the ordinary inquest demanded by Chinese law under such circumstances. Instead of coming at once, as he should have done, he waited five days, till the body, under this tropical heat, was decomposed, and then came and had the audacity to declare that the Christian had not been murdered—that it was clear he had committed suicide by taking a dose of poison! No

witnesses were examined, and his (the murdered man's) wife and son, and other friends who are still heathen, were threatened and frightened into silence by the magistrates and subordinates. It was, however, too favourable an occasion for the magistrate not to exact his ordinary "squeeze," and it is confidently reported that the gentry were compelled to make him and his subordinates a bribe of 4,000 dols. These are specimens of the way in which the Christians are treated, and how the authorities deal with the cases.

The name of the murdered man, Ling Check-Ang, deserves to be recorded, as that of the proto-martyr of the Fuh-Kien Church. We cannot doubt that in China, as everywhere, the blood of the martyrs will prove to be the seed of the Church; but meanwhile the sufferings of our persecuted brethren call for prayerful remembrance and sympathy. May they be kept faithful even unto death, and be enabled to face every trial in the spirit of the prayer in our Litany, "That it may please Thee to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts!"

For all Thy saints who from their labours rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy Name, O Jesu, be for ever blessed!
Alleluia!

Oh may Thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win, with them, the victor's crown of gold!
Alleluia!

W. W. How.

Look up, ye saints of God,
Nor fear to tread below
The path your Saviour trod
Of daily toil and woe;
Wait but a little while
In uncomplaining love,
His own most gracious smile
Shall welcome you above.

Sir H. W. Baker.

CHAPTER XIV.

SIOH-CHUO AND THE WESTERN VILLAGES.

The strength of the hills is His also.—*Ps.* xcv. 4.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!—*Isa.* lii. 7.

Hills of the North, rejoice,
River and mountain spring,
Hark to the advent voice,
Valley and lowland sing:
Though absent long, your Lord is nigh;
He judgment brings and victory.

C. E. Oakley.

 O the north and north-west of the valley in which stands the city of Ning-Taik rises a rugged mountain plateau, some 3,000 feet above the level of the sea. It is approached by a very steep pass, up which the path winds and gradually mounts for a distance of five or six miles of continual ascent. Of this ascent Mr. Wolfe writes: "Nothing can exceed the grand wildness of the scenery on every side. Yawning beneath on the left are immense gorges and ravines, to look down into which from our high pathway makes one's head dizzy." Mr. Hutchinson says: "Precipices open below us, and crags of black rock tower up above us; whilst on the opposite side of the ravine the perpendicular cliffs are clothed with verdure which seems to float in the air. It is the Lyn valley, so well known to North Devon tourists, on a vastly larger scale."

The mountain peaks in this district are regarded by the Chinese as quite inaccessible, and though doubtless the Alpine Club would make short work of them, it may very probably be true that they have never yet been scaled by human foot. The rocks and wooded gorges are the haunt of the wild goat, the wild cat, and the wild boar, and even the tiger makes his lair in their almost impenetrable recesses. Tiger-hunting is a lucrative business, not only because of the value of the skin, but because the Chinese physicians have great faith in the supposed medicinal properties of the bones; but the animal is difficult to hunt, being rarely seen near the abodes of men. Equally appreciated are the blood and horns of the wild goat. For the blood the apothecaries will pay a high price when they can get it. It is boiled and preserved in cakes, and in that form the peasants bring it into the towns for sale. The parings of the horns are regarded as an excellent tonic; "and," says Mr. Wolfe, "one will rarely get a prescription from a native doctor without them." The flesh of the wild goat and that of the wild boar are esteemed great delicacies, and fetch high prices.

It is not to the lofty and conspicuous peaks that the winding path ascends, but to the far lower, though still high level of the plateau already mentioned. This remarkable table-land stretches more than twenty miles northward and westward. Though maintaining a general height of some 3,000 feet, it is by no means a flat plain, but is dotted with a vast number of little beehive-shaped hills, rising close to one another to varying heights and covered with vegetation. The view over the whole district from one of the higher peaks is described as most extensive and most curious.

One would expect, on at length reaching the top of the long and weary path, to find this highland region a desolate moor. But, on the contrary, no less than four hundred

villages are stated to be scattered over the plateau, which is called SA-HIONG, or the Western Villages. Certainly it is densely populated, and every acre of ground highly cultivated. The beehive-like hills are covered with rows of tea-shrubs, planted in terraces from base to summit; and the intervening bits of level space are the rice and corn fields. The climate is spoken of as delightful, being comparatively cool in summer.

The people of the Sa-Hiong table-land are simple, industrious, and well-to-do. Mr. Hutchinson says that the men have "a Jewish type of countenance," and the women "a pleasing frankness and absence of the artificial shyness which marks the dwellers in the lowlands." Each village is occupied by one clan, comprising in some cases 200 or 300 families, all bearing the same sirname, and all tracing their descent from one ancestor. In giving examples of these names Mr. Wolfe translates them, and calls them Long, Wood, Stone. The name of the clan gives itself also to the village; thus there are what Mr. Wolfe calls Long Town, Wood Town, Stone Town. Of this latter place, Stone Town, the Chinese name is given, SIOH-CHUO. It is the principal village, as being in the centre of the district, though in population and wealth it is surpassed by others.

On to this populous table-land have mounted the feet of the messengers of Christ, bringing good tidings and publishing peace; and among these highland villages the name of Jesus is now dear to many scores of humble Chinese believers. It is only six or seven years since the Gospel was carried up to Sa-Hiong by a faithful colporteur at Ning-Taik. How many converts there are now we do not know; but eighty-six had been baptized up to the middle of 1874, and there were then nearly a hundred candidates besides. Remembering how entirely these simple and unlearned people had been left to

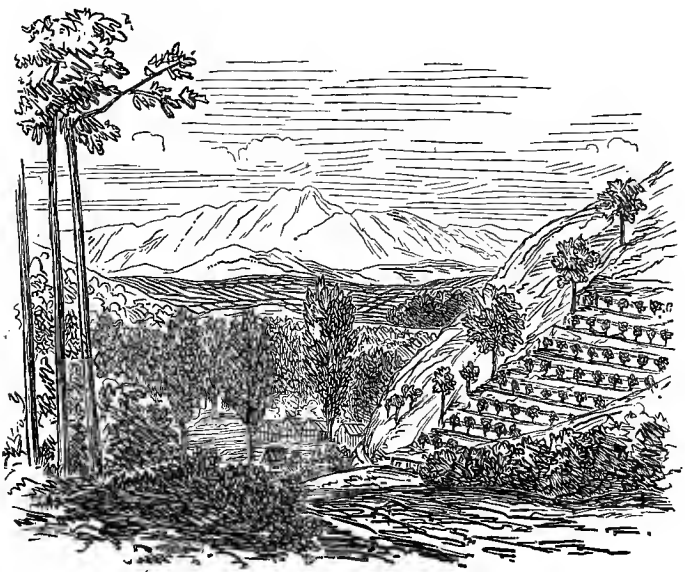
themselves, and with the experience of more favoured stations before us, it is a significant and most encouraging fact that not one of the sixty-eight admitted to the Church had either drawn back of his own accord, or been subjected for inconsistency to the discipline of excommunication.

It was in 1870 that Mr. Wolfe first ascended to the Western Villages. Mr. Cribb had been there before, but we have no account of his visit. There can be little doubt that no European before them had stood upon the plateau; yet we do not find that they were subjected by these simple peasants to the unmannerly curiosity so often exhibited elsewhere. Mr. Wolfe arrived late at night at Sioh-Chuo (Stone Town), and was hospitably received by the head of the clan, "Mr. Stone," but was permitted at once to retire to rest without intrusion :—

> I was exceedingly tired from the long walk over the mountain road, and at once retired to my little room. I lay undressed upon the pallet, and immediately fell asleep. About twelve o'clock at night I was awakened by the loud voices of singing in the next room by the catechist, colporteur, Christians, and inquirers, who had remained reading and praying to that hour.

Next morning the people crowded to the house to see him, but they were "exceedingly polite," and quietly retired while he breakfasted. After breakfast, he examined three candidates for baptism, one of them being "Mr. Stone" himself, who had, with others, embraced the faith of Christ upon the preaching of the Ning-Taik colporteur. By this time many hundreds of people had assembled outside, and were patiently waiting for a sight of the foreigner; so Mr. Wolfe, accompanied by his two Native helpers, went out and began to preach to a dense throng of eager listeners. The sun, however, was so hot that the elders and head-men invited them to come into the Ancestral Hall, a large old building, held in

profound reverence as the dwelling, some centuries before, of the first ancestor of the "Stones," who (it is said) migrated from Nanking and built the house, round which the village gradually grew as his descendants multiplied. In this hall, surrounded by the ancestral tablets of the Stone family, and with the elders sitting on either side—one of them an aged

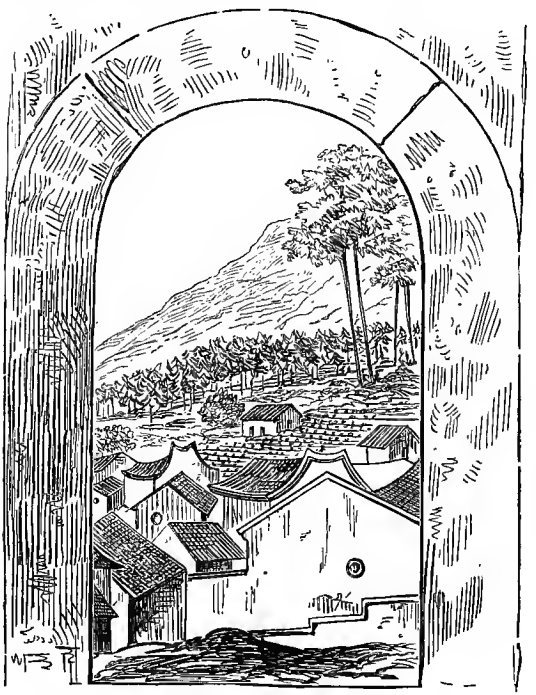


VIEW OF SIOH-CHUO.

patriarch of ninety years—Mr. Wolfe and his companions stood up and preached for two hours; the attention never flagging, and the elders, when he had finished, thanking him for his "doctrine," which they pronounced "good, and in accordance with reason, but new to the Western Villages."

At the close of this deeply interesting meeting, Mr. Wolfe

and a little company of believing Chinese retired into an "upper room" in "Mr. Stone's" house, and (it being Sunday) held morning service; and after the second lesson the three adult candidates and two children were baptized—the first-fruits of Sioh-Chuo unto God.



VIEW FROM A WINDOW IN SIOH-CHUO.

In the afternoon they proceeded to "Long Town," a village about a mile distant. There, too, they were invited, by the head-man, "Mr. Long," to preach in the Ancestral Hall. On returning to Stone Town, Mr. Wolfe was invited to take some

refreshment at the house of a leading man, a relative of one of the converts that day baptized :—

This man is a most devout Buddhist. We had some very interesting conversation with him. He contended that Buddhism and Christianity were essentially the same, that both taught men to live virtuously, and both pointed to future rewards for the good, and punishments for the wicked. We endeavoured to point out carefully to him the essential differences. He looked very thankful, but made no reply to our explanations. The Taouists and Buddhists have agreed to tolerate each other upon the supposition that, after all, their respective systems are essentially the same, and so their gods are content to live on easy terms with one another, and not unfrequently stand together upon the same altar, and receive the adoration of the same devotee. Christianity too would be tolerated, and the Chinese would easily be induced to accept Christ amongst the number of their gods, if it could be content with the same terms on which all the other systems are willing to be received, viz., that no one of them claim to be absolute and exclusive truth. Now as Christianity does claim this, and openly avows its determination to expel by moral force every rival system from the altars of this nation, it naturally at first appears strange and presumptuous to this people. The Buddhist gentleman above referred to expressed this feeling when I placed before him the claims of Christianity to an undivided supremacy over his heart and soul. He would gladly believe in so noble and pure a being as the New Testament represents Jesus to be, if he might be allowed to believe in Buddha, and Tau, and Confucius also. This man is a type of a very large class in China, especially amongst the followers of Buddha.

Next morning Mr. Wolfe continued his journey, and from him we hear no more of the Western Villages until his visit in 1873, after his return from England. Mr. Mahood, however, twice refers to them during the interval. First, in his Report for 1871, he says :—

There is a very interesting family in Sioh-Chuo, consisting of ten members, all of whom have embraced the Christian faith. The husband and wife were formerly opium-smokers, but since they embraced Christianity they have renounced that evil habit, and are now in prosperous

circumstances. Family prayers are daily held in their house both morning and evening, and the little children never think of lying upon their beds without supplicating the blessing of God, and thanking Him for the mercies of the past day. There are many families in Christian England where the worship of God is not conducted with the same love and reverence as it is in that family. This year five out of their number were baptized into the visible Church, and I trust they have been adopted into the family of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

In the following year Mr. Mahood reports that he had baptized the last four members of this family. "They are now," he writes, "a very happy and prosperous family. When I last visited them, they treated me with every token of respect, and while I remained in their home every attention was paid to my wants. Tired after a hard day's journey over a rough mountainous pathway, we seem to forget our fatigue when we sit down with a Christian family in one of these sequestered villages, far away from the busy world."

The account of Mr. Wolfe's second visit in 1873 is full of interest, and introduces us also to LIANG-MOI and other villages :—

Started for the deeply-interesting highlands of Sa-hiong. The scenery between Ning-Taik and Sa-hiong, for its wild grandeur, baffles all description, and surpasses anything that we had yet seen during our present journey. About half-way on the road to Sa-hiong, we rested at the house of one of the Christians—one of the first who was baptized at the village called Stonetown. The name of the place at which we rested, and where this Christian lives, is Liang-Moi. I was glad to find that, since my first visit to this place, through the influence of this man, twenty have been brought to Christ in this little village. Not one in this place can read or write except Cheng-Seng, the first Christian here, and his little son, who is now about ten years of age. The father, Cheng-Seng, is now one of our students, and the only one left in the village to read morning and evening prayers is this little boy. These twenty Christians come together morning and evening, and this child reads a hymn which they all join in singing. He then reads a few verses of the colloquial Testament, and some one of them engages in prayer. Sometimes, how-

ever, the little boy reads some of the prayers out of our Prayer-book. He is a bright little fellow, and I hope one day to see him carrying on the work which his father has commenced.

Having taken some refreshment, we collected the Christians together and had a prayer-meeting. There were seventeen present. At another small village about two miles farther in among the hills, called Ko-lang-sang, *i.e.*, "Mount of Olives," there are five Christians, who come regularly on the Sabbath to Liang-Moi to join with the Christians there in worshipping God. Occasionally the male portion of them travel to Ning-Taik or to Stonetown for Sabbath worship. They are also visited now and again by the catechists from the last-mentioned places.

After prayer-meeting we started from Liang-Moi, and commenced our ascent up the mountain towards Sa-hiong. It took us about two hours to ascend step by step to the top. Here I stood, enraptured for some time with the wild and magnificent glories of nature as they were presented in the scene around me. The mind was at once carried upwards in thought, and an involuntary exclamation of praise to the Great Creator burst forth from the lips of both the catechist and myself. But it was getting late, and we had a long distance yet to travel to the village of Stonetown. So we pressed on.

Just before dark, we arrived at the house of one of the Christians about a mile out of Stonetown. Every member of this large family has been brought to Christ. The father and two of his stalwart sons came out to meet us, and by main force took me out of the sedan, and my entire company and myself into the house, and literally *compelled* us all to partake of some food which they had prepared ready for our arrival. The attentions of the lady of the house were entirely devoted to my comfort for the time. She frequently pressed me to partake of the food which she had prepared. There was no foolish shyness displayed by this Christian matron, and I could not help admiring her simple manners and unconscious dignity as she moved about the house attending to her business. She spoke to me as if she had known me for years, and said she had often prayed for me to come back again.

It was quite dark before we could tear ourselves away from this family. In the meanwhile many of the Christians came out with flambeaux to meet us and escort us into the village. We were warmly welcomed by all the Christians, and many of the heathens also came to show their friendship. We had the room soon filled, and before they all left we had a prayer-meeting, in which hearty thankfulness and praise to God were

expressed for my safe return by the dear Christians and catechist. I was deeply touched by all this, and also when they told how that they had continually held a special prayer-meeting on my behalf. It was impossible not to feel encouraged by all this. There are now in this place a very large number of Christians and inquirers, and I hope and trust the day is not far distant when this entire village and many other villages around will give up their idols and come and turn to the Lord their God.

The next morning (Sunday) all the Christians assembled for worship. The place was not able to hold all who came. There were about sixty Christians and a number of heathen. I preached on the parable of the Prodigal Son. All listened with the deepest attention, and I am more than convinced that the Spirit of God was in the midst of us this morning. One man, an inquirer, wept bitterly the whole time. While I was expounding the parable he seemed really touched. After service I spoke to him. He told me he had been a great sinner, that the case of the prodigal was his, and that he wept at the thought of his sins, and was also affected by the love of God in saving such sinners as himself. I was very much encouraged at this proof of the working of the Spirit amongst us, for who else could convince of sin? who else could take the love of Christ and show it as it was manifested to this poor man? The world may talk as it please, the Spirit is working with us, and the Lord is with our armies. This man is now an earnest candidate for baptism. There were several women present at morning service. I baptized the infant daughter of one of the Christians.

After service, I went, accompanied by some of the Christians, to preach in the great Ancestral Hall, in the heart of the village. A very large number of the villagers came to listen, and on the very spot where, exactly three years previously, I preached for the first time to the people of Stonetown, I again was permitted to offer them salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. Many of those who were present, and who heard me the first time years ago, have accepted the Saviour, and are now members of the Church. Many more were present who also had heard me then, but still persist in remaining in their heathen state. Others who were present, and who heard the first message, have passed to their account, apparently unaffected by what they had heard. Amongst these latter are the two old patriarchs of the village who so politely invited me into the hall three years ago, and placed me between themselves in the place of honour, and who decided that the doctrines which I came to

preach were good, and gave their consent to our teaching in the village. But these two old men never seemed to take any personal interest in Christianity, and they died apparently as dark and as hopeless as if they had never heard about the Saviour. I mentioned this to the people on this occasion, and dwelt for some time on the circumstances, and warned them to delay no longer, lest they, too, should be called away without receiving the gift which was sent them by God without money and without price. I think my address produced some effect on the people.

Many joined in our evening service. After evening service many of the Christians remained, and we all joined for about two hours in singing hymns. There were four women who seemed to enjoy this exercise very much. Amongst the men who remained was the man who seemed so deeply affected at the morning service, and he seemed thoroughly to enter into the singing. I spent a very pleasant day, and was greatly cheered.

The catechist Chuo, who has charge of this place, is a truly good man, full of faith, and labours for Christ. He is loved in a very remarkable degree by the Christians here, and the heathen have the greatest confidence in him. Very few men can do what he does. I visited with him this morning several companies of women at their own houses, and I was surprised, indeed, at the way he was received, and the confidence which his presence seemed to inspire in these women. None other of our catechists can visit the women with the same ease. Indeed, in most other places our catechists can scarcely have any opportunity, except in the chapel publicly, of teaching the women.

This catechist, Chuo, or Cho, is the man who was the first convert at San-kaik-iong, and in consequence of whose persecution the proclamation of the Lo-Nguong magistrate was issued (*see* pages 165, 170).

The only other reference to Sa-Hiong in the reports is in Mr. Hutchinson's narrative. He found, at the "Mount of Olives" mentioned in the foregoing extract, that the "five men" had grown into "a little group of praying families"; and, on the plateau, the numbers we have already given as the result of the work of the four or five preceding years. At Sioh-Chuo, on the occasion of his visit, five candidates were baptized. "For the baptisms," he says, "the best basin

was forthcoming ; and no font ever had more expressive symbols than this, for on the outside was painted a great red dragon, whilst within was the single character *Fuh, i.e.*, 'happiness.'"

A more deeply interesting work of grace, in a more interesting country, among a more interesting people, it would be hard to conceive. The story, even in the too meagre and imperfect form in which we have it, is of itself one of the "Evidences of Christianity." How could a spiritual and self-denying religion make its way in this remote region, against all the family associations and clannish prejudices which in such a people are so strong, and with scarcely any effort on the part of the English missionary, if it were not of God? If, as has been justly said, "Christendom is the most convincing evidence of Christianity," surely this little corner of Chinese Christendom has no unworthy place in that great structure of irrefragable proof.

The mountain dews shall nourish
A seed in weakness sown,
Whose fruit shall spread and flourish,
And shake like Lebanon.

J. Montgomery.

And all through the mountains, thunder riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a cry to the gate of heaven,
"Rejoice! I have found My sheep!"
And the angels echoed around the Throne,
"Rejoice! for the Lord brings back His own!"

E. Clephane.

CHAPTER XV.

KU-CHENG.

Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us. Thou makest us a byword among the heathen, a shaking of the head among the people. . . All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten Thee . . . Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from Thy way.—*Ps.* xliv. 13, 14, 17, 18.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.—*Ps.* cxxvi. 2, 3.

Not first the bright, and after that the dark,
But first the dark, and after that the bright;
First the thick cloud, and then the rainbow's arc,
First the dark grave, then resurrection-light.

'Tis first the night—stern night of storm and war,—
Long night of heavy clouds and veilèd skies;
Then the far sparkle of the Morning Star,
That bids the saints awake, and dawn arise.

Bonar.

 ITHERTO our attention has been confined to the north-eastern or coast district. We must now go much further inland, and visit the north-western district. This part of the mission-field of Fuh-Kien is approached by ascending the river Min, as far as Chui-Kau, which may be regarded as the gate of the district, and then (for most of the stations) turning northward towards Ku-Cheng, the centre of operations in that direction.

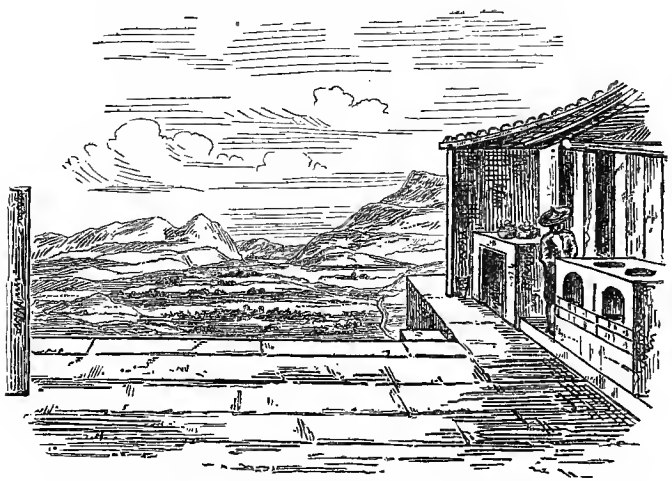
The scenery of the Min has been already described. From

Chui-Kau to Ku-Cheng, a distance of thirty-three miles, the path leads up a long and tortuous valley, between lofty mountains, down which rushes a narrow and noisy stream, one of the feeders of the Min. At one place, called the Dragon's Hole, the torrent leaps over the rocks in a cascade of great beauty. The route *down* from Ku-Cheng is thus described by Mr. Hutchinson :—

Monday, Oct. 26th, 1874.—Started at 4 A.M., by moonlight. The city was hushed in slumber. Soon we were in the open country, and ere long entered a romantic glen, its picturesqueness heightened by the moonlight—glens, waterfalls, precipices, and luxuriant foliage intermixed. As day dawned, the villagers, newly awakened, stared at us with surprise. Our route still lay beside the river. At times the stream was lost under the massy rocks which lined its channel. We stopped to clamber down to the Dragon's Hole—a splendid fall, formed by the whole body of water suddenly emerging from under over-arching rocks and plunging down into a chasm which yawned fearfully below us. The whole scene was exceedingly grand; the overhanging precipices richly wooded; the gigantic boulders, over which we had clambered down, worn by storm-water and variously tinted; the ceaseless roar of the fall, and the rise and fall of the spray-cloud over the abyss, made up a picture on which the memory delights to linger. Resuming our journey, we crossed a fine old bridge, and observed that the piers, formed of granite, were shaped like the prow of a ship and sloped outwards, so as to divide the storm-waters and offer the least possible resistance. And so on, amid scenery constantly changing in character, yet all beautiful, until we arrived at Chui-kau, or "water-mouth." Here we were once more on the Min.

Ku-Cheng, or "the ancient field," is finely situated, in a plain surrounded by mountains. It is an important city, with a large population; but not more than two-thirds of the space enclosed within the walls, which are four miles and a half in circumference, is occupied by the habitations of the living. "It is," observes Mr. Wolfe, "a necropolis, a city of the dead. Thousands of coffins occupy the spare ground inside the walls, and there are numbers of sheds built to protect them from the rain

and from the heat of the sun. The laws of China forbid burial within the city walls, but they do not prohibit this practice of keeping the coffins exposed in the city to public gaze." No manufactures are carried on, the inhabitants being all engaged in agricultural pursuits; and the city is described as "a quiet old place, the very people having a sleepy look"; partly, no doubt, owing to their being inveterate opium-smokers, which gives "a cadaverous appearance."



VIEW OF KU-CHENG, FROM REST-HOUSE ON HILL, LOOKING WEST.

The stream which, in its lower course, becomes a foaming torrent, is, in this upland plain, a peaceful and pretty river, and almost encircles the city. Within the walls is a pagoda dedicated to its honour, and designed to propitiate its wrath. Bishop Alford mentions that it is crossed by "a very lofty bridge of five well-spanned arches, with a covered roof." It is utilised for the irrigation of the fields by means of large water-

wheels, twenty feet in diameter, which raise the water and discharge it into troughs laid to convey it over the country.

Ku-Cheng was occupied as a mission station at the end of 1865. Two catechists went first as pioneers, and hired a room for a preaching chapel. Then Mr. Wolfe visited the city, preached to large and attentive audiences, and left one of the catechists to carry on the work. One incident of this visit is worth quoting :—

This has been a most happy day. All the morning spent in answering questions on the doctrines of Jesus, and talking to those who came to inquire. One old man said he would send his sons to learn the doctrine. We have great hopes of this old man. After breakfast, went out to see the city, and to preach in the streets. We were followed by crowds. We walked through the principal streets, and came to the north gate. Here is an immense temple, called "The Temple of the President of Hades," and kept in beautiful repair. It is literally filled with idols. We were followed into this place by a great crowd. I examined all the idols. The colporteur had a large number of books, which were distributed here. I bought some sweetmeats of a lad who had a stall by the temple, and gave some to the colporteur; but he, with more zeal than prudence, went to the huge idol which stood in the portico, and placed the sweetmeat in its mouth, saying, "Come, let us see whether this fellow can eat sweetmeats." The whole affair looked so ridiculous that the whole crowd turned round and laughed heartily at the idol, and indulged in no very respectful remarks on the senseless piece of wood. This gave me an excellent opportunity of preaching Christ. I took up my stand in front of a large idol, and addressed the people for half an hour. The greatest attention was paid during the whole time. I told them, though we looked upon the idols as nothing more than wood and stone, we were very far from wishing to do anything that would hurt the feelings of the people, and disapproved of the act of my native brother who was with me. I then pointed to the idol, and showed how foolish it was to think it could either benefit or harm anybody; that it could not protect itself from insult or injury; to worship it was violating the commandments of Heaven; that the great Creator prohibits idolatry, and wishes us to worship only Himself. I closed with an exposition of the name Jesus, and showed that He was the only Saviour. Several now asked who was this great Creator? who saw Him? where did

He live? who could worship what they could not see? &c. The catechist stepped forward to speak, and we answered all their questions satisfactorily. But several interrupted the catechist, and one or two, apparently zealous defenders of idolatry, were aroused by our attacks, and endeavoured to argue on their behalf.

At the close of 1866, Mr. Cribb, who took the superintendence of the station, was able to report that the catechist had laboured with much encouragement, and that larger premises had had to be engaged on account of the numbers attending the preaching. Several tours had been made through the surrounding villages, and large quantities of tracts and books disposed of. One man, sixty-five years old, had been baptized, and was earnestly teaching "the doctrine" to his wife. Early in the following year the wife was baptized too; and five others were admitted to the Church during 1867. One was a promising young man, who was at once taken into the preparatory class for catechists; another was the schoolmaster of a village eight miles off; a third was the son of a "literary man"; and the remaining two were remarkable for the patience with which they bore a probation of fifteen months before baptism, imposed upon them in consequence of their having been great opium-smokers, to test their steadfastness in refraining from the pernicious habit.*

Not that the work was carried on without difficulties. One arose from the refusal of the catechist to contribute the customary subscription, or tax, of two dollars to the idol temples. As in similar cases at Lo-Nguong, the house was in consequence attacked and serious damage inflicted; but the Ku-Cheng police, unlike those of Lo-Nguong, interfered and arrested the rioters. Another difficulty was in connection with the slanderous reports spread by a man who came to the chapel as a professed inquirer, obtained copies of the books, and then went

* One of these opium-smokers, Su, has lately been admitted to holy orders. *See* p. 68.

about telling absurd stories of what went on there, affirming that he had been admitted to the secrets of "the religion," in proof of which he produced the books. For instance, he affirmed that at the Fuh-Chow Mission-house there was a pond or tank containing water brought from a wonderful place called the Pool of Bethesda; that converts, under the pretence of being cleansed from all sin, were required to wash in this pond; that those who did so suddenly dissolved, and were no more seen; but that from the dregs consequently deposited the foreigners extracted opium! A curious instance indeed of the way in which the wicked opium traffic hinders missionary effort.

In the following year, 1868, another difficulty arose and hindered many inquirers at Ku-Cheng and other places from coming forward. This was the persecution endured by a new catechist who was sent to Ku-Cheng, "a graduate of the Sewtsai or B.A. degree," who had been baptized at Fuh-Chow in the December previous. No sooner did he commence his work, than a storm of persecution arose against him from the literati of Ku-Cheng, as well as from some members of his own family. Besides attempting to compel him to support idolatry, they threatened to cause his degree to be taken away from him, and to deprive him of his share in the inheritance of his forefathers. To show that they were in earnest in this latter particular, they refused to give him his share of pork, which, according to the will of his ancestors, was to be given to every member of the family, old or young, male or female, on a given day in every year. This may appear a small matter, but being noised abroad throughout the Ku-Cheng district, it actually had the effect of frightening most of the inquirers not only at Ku-Cheng city, but also at places as distant as Sek-paik-tu and Sang-Iong. The catechist, however, bore all bravely, and avowed his determination, come what might, not to deny his Master.

Ku-Cheng was one of the places visited by Bishop Alford in 1868. He baptized three men, and confirmed twelve men and three women. His own account of a Sunday he spent there is very interesting :—

I never spent so interesting a Sunday as the 24th of May at Ku-Cheng. Both toilet and breakfast were soon made, and the services of the day arranged. Three catechists were present: one had brought two men candidates for baptism, and another a third; these were to be examined and exhorted privately. At noon I proposed morning prayer and the baptismal service; at 3 P.M. the litany and confirmation service; and at 7 P.M. the Communion service and sacrament of the Lord's Supper. These arrangements were very conveniently followed, and the Mission chapel and premises secured quietude and comfort.

We took up our quarters for the day in the schoolroom. Here Mr. Cribb examined the candidates for baptism. One was a tailor, from a village fifteen miles distant, and another a carpenter, from a village three miles further off in the same direction; and these two Chinamen had travelled since Christmas last these thirty miles and more, arriving on the Saturday and returning on the Monday, and sojourning during the Sunday with a friend and relative in Ku-Cheng, to meet the catechist and receive instruction. They obtained neither a cash nor a meal by their visits; and surely such labour and constancy betoken sincerity. I put a few questions to them through Mr. Cribb, and their answers were ready and satisfactory. The third candidate lived in the town of Sek-paik-tu, where the Church Missionary Society has a station and a catechist, a considerable distance from Ku-Cheng. Mr. Cribb had examined this man for baptism on his last visit, but delayed his baptism till he had been further taught. He was a sweetmeat vendor; very poor, but he never sold on Sunday; very regular at the catechist's week-day as well as Sunday services, though often wearied by his walks to sell his sweetmeats. The catechist had no doubt of his sincerity. He had given up his idols and lived a consistent life; and although his answers were those of a very simple man, to have refused him baptism, which he urgently requested, would have been to make the strait gate straiter than the Bible makes it. At our noonday service I preached on baptism, and baptized these three men, and rejoiced to do so.

No bishop (perhaps no European besides the missionaries) had been to Ku-Cheng before; catechists, therefore, as well as more recent converts,

awaited confirmation. The three catechists present I requested to take a part with Mr. Cribb and myself in the services of the day, reading the lessons and giving out the hymns. One is a literary man, a B.A., residing at Ku-Cheng, evidently a clever, and I hope also a good man. The second is a Christian of some years' standing, and his experience has been a strange and very varied one; the missionaries trust him, believing his conversion sound, and he serves them well. The third has, since Ku-Cheng was occupied as a missionary station, acted there as catechist, and the intelligent responses and devout demeanour of his little flock gave strong testimony in his favour. I was much pleased with the catechist, and hope some day he will be ordained as pastor to the native church. Eight men and three women from Ku-Cheng, three men from Sek-paik-tu, and one man from Sang-long were confirmed. The three men baptized at noon I did not confirm, preferring in the case of heathen converts that an interval of probation should pass between baptism and confirmation. The three women were confirmed first, and then the men. My address was readily interpreted by Mr. Cribb, and, from the manifest attention with which it was listened to, I do trust God blessed what was spoken to their edification.

At the evening sacramental service twenty Christian converts communicated. The collection made at the offertory was encouraging—upwards of two dollars; all present contributed and with apparent readiness. So far from being paid to come, as some disingenuously have said, the Christian profession of these converts costs them something, for they are expected to give in support of the means of grace, and in this the missionaries are not disappointed. I spoke to them on "remembering Christ" at the Lord's table; this sacrament was a memorial, a means of grace, and an act of faithful devotion; and nothing could exceed the devout attention of my hearers. Indeed, it was no ordinary sacramental meeting. The communicants themselves, the place, the occasion, were all worthy of notice; and I could not but remind them that at the institution of the Lord's Supper only twelve were present, but those twelve Christians were those to whom Christ gave the injunction "to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel"; and they obeyed. So now what might not these twenty Christians do for China? for Christ is the same, and His Gospel the same, and His Spirit is not straitened. I never spent a more profitable Sabbath.

Some of those baptized and confirmed on this occasion

were, it will be seen, from out-stations. During the next two or three years, although at several of these places there was much encouragement, at Ku-Cheng itself the infant Church grew but slowly. Nevertheless, when the Bishop visited the city a second time in 1871, he found twenty-two adult baptized members, besides children. He confirmed six men on this occasion, but some of these were from Ang-Iong and elsewhere.

The Shan-sin-fan plot, in the same year, 1871, has been already alluded to (page 56). As the Ku-Cheng district especially suffered by it, we give in this place the interesting narrative sent by the Rev. J. E. Mahood, who was then in sole charge of the Mission, of his perilous journey to Ku-Cheng and Ang-Iong during the disturbances :—

When the disturbance seemed to subside, and when I was assured by the authorities that things were quiet, I resolved to visit our congregations in the Ku-Cheng district, where heretofore there has been no disturbance, and where the Christians are held in high esteem by those who know them for their honesty and integrity.

On the 29th of August I started from Fuh-Chow, and proceeded safely on my journey until about twelve o'clock the second day, when I was attacked by a number of villagers, who threatened me with death if I did not leave the place immediately. We exhorted the people not to be so violent, as we had come to do them good and not to harm them; but all was to no purpose, they still cursed the wretched barbarian, who was nothing better than a dog. Seeing that delay could do no good, I left a copy of the Ten Commandments with them and proceeded on my journey until sunset, when we called at a little village to make inquiries about a night's lodging. Before we had time to approach the place we were met by a number of men, who looked at us with grave suspicion. Our names, places of abode, and occupation were asked for, and then we in our turn asked if we could get a night's lodging. After much deliberation, one of the oldest men in the village said he would give us shelter if we paid him well for it. To this we agreed, and immediately proceeded to examine the house in which we were to take up our abode for the night. It was a wretched old hovel, without a board or a little

straw on which we could lie; so I was compelled to sleep in my sedan-chair all night.

Early in the morning we arose, proceeded on our journey, crossed over some very high mountains, saw a leopard in the distance, and at four o'clock in the afternoon we met a man from Ku-Cheng, who told us that our chapel had been pulled down the night before. I stood and paused for a moment to think what was best to be done. At last I thought that I was in the path of duty, and that not one hair of my head could fall without God's knowledge, so I determined to go and see the Christians and try and cheer them in their trials. As it was getting dark when we were drawing near Ku-Cheng I thought it better to stop at a small inn for the night and enter the city in the day-time.

Early the following morning, having settled the reckoning, we proceeded on our way, and when we approached the city all things seemed to be quiet, and I was permitted to visit the ruins of our chapel without molestation. Having transacted some mission business I committed the people to the care of God and started for Ang Iong, where during the past few years many devoted men have embraced the Christian faith. Twenty adult candidates were wishing for baptism for the past year, and I intended to receive them into the visible Church. When on my way I heard that no disturbance had taken place there, and so I felt sure that all things were right; but to my great astonishment, when I arrived there, I found that the foundations of a church which the people were building for themselves to worship in had been torn up, and the house of the convert who first embraced Christianity in that neighbourhood had been robbed. While I was talking to the people about what had happened a number of wicked men assembled around the house in which I was stopping, and began to abuse me as a wicked barbarian, whose life they were determined to take. For some time the mob continued to increase, and having armed themselves with all sorts of knives and weapons they placed a guard round the house, so that I could not make my escape. I resolved several times to make a rush through their midst and try to escape, but the Christians gathered around me and entreated me not to do so, as the wicked people had determined to kill me if I ventured out in the dark. I took their advice and remained in the house all night. The chair in which I was riding was smashed to pieces by the mob during the night to show their ill feeling towards me. The next day the besiegers blew their horn and gave the signal to draw nearer the house. Seeing the determination of the enemy, I joined the Chris-

tians in prayer to God that He might frustrate their wicked design. In a short time after, one of the besiegers, a deceitful-looking creature, came and offered us terms for our capitulation. He said that if I were willing to pay them 200 dollars they would permit me to go away in safety, or that if I had not so much money I could give them part of that sum and permit them to carry away the timber which had been purchased for the building of the church. To this the Christians objected, for, as we had done nothing wrong, we had no right to pay them any money. When this proposal was made the wicked tragedy committed by the brigands in Greece flashed across my mind. I had no money with me, and a cheque was of no value, and I knew that if I gave them 200 dollars they would afterwards demand more.

Seeing that they were so depraved I thought my best plan was to send one of the Christians who was unknown to the people to the officers at Ku-Cheng and ask them to send me help. This I afterwards found it was quite impossible for them to do, for all the soldiers in the district (which is one of the most important in this province) were thirty-three of the most degraded-looking wretches that man ever witnessed. When the people outside the house saw that I was unwilling to accede to their request they began to break in the roof. Some of the Christians then went out and besought them not to do so, as we had done no injury to them. The leading man amongst the enemy declared that the chief fault against us was that we were going to build a house, which if we were permitted to accomplish, the whole neighbourhood would embrace our vile religion. I may say that within the past three years upwards of one hundred and twenty have embraced the Gospel of Christ in that district, and a more devoted people I believe were never in the Church. The next demand the besiegers made was that I should accompany them to the officer at Ku-Cheng, and have the case tried. Their impression was that the officer would behead me. What gave them this impression I cannot tell, but some suppose that the Chinese officials have a habit of lowering foreigners in the eyes of the people, so that they may exalt themselves as superior to any other nation, and owing to this the common people suppose that the government and officials are opposed to foreigners.

I accepted the proposal of the enemy, and agreed to accompany the Christians to Ku-Cheng, not knowing what might befall me by the way, but simply relying upon the protection of the Almighty I marched like a condemned criminal in front with a band of faithful, unflinching Christians

behind, and our accusers in the rear. Tired and thirsty, under a burning sun, we travelled along a most wretched pathway for fifteen miles, mocked and abused by every little urchin by the way till at last we came in sight of Ku-Cheng. When I was within half a mile of the city gate I was attacked by a labourer in the field, who tried to kill me with a heavy iron hoe, but fortunately he missed the first blow, and the second time he struck at me I was able to guard off the blow, and the Christians then came up to us, ran between, and saved me from further attack. Seeing the vindictiveness of this man, I knew that if I gave sufficient time for a crowd to assemble around me, I could not possibly escape with my life, so I walked on as quickly as possible, not to give the people time to assemble.

When I came near the gate of the city, I made a catechist who accompanied me go on quickly before me and show me the way to the officer's yamun. We passed through a long street for about half a mile, and then made a rush into the yamun, and the gates were immediately closed. We had only just got in before the people assembled in thousands outside the door. A few hours before, a house of one of the Christians had been plundered, and the people were all on the move ready for any mischief. When the officer heard that I had come for his protection he came out and treated me very kindly. He asked me the particulars about the disturbance, and when he heard them he declared that the whole affair was a wicked persecution against good men, who never before had been accused of any crime. I sat in the yamun about an hour until the excitement would abate a little, and then the officer endeavoured to take me on my way out of the city, but no sooner had I got to the door than the stones began to fly in all directions, and the top of my chair was completely battered in over my head. The authority of the officer was set at defiance, and the rabble for a time had their own way.

Seeing that it was impossible for me to pass through the crowd without being killed, I leaped out of the sedan chair and ran back into the yamun, where I remained for the night. As soon as I got inside, the gates were closed, and the officers exhorted the people to be quiet. I asked the people in the yamun had they any soldiers to protect the house during the night, and one of them directed my attention to a few miserable, emaciated, dejected-looking creatures, who were standing behind the door in perfect agony for fear the crowd should make a rush upon them. I then asked them had they any guns, and was told that they had nothing but a few old matchlocks, which seemed to belong to some bygone age; the

only redeeming character they possessed was that they were perfectly harmless. I next asked had they any ammunition, but found that they had nothing of the kind, and if they had it was quite useless, for the guns could never fire it. When I got this information I at once found out the reason why all law and authority were set at defiance. The officers are allowed by the emperor certain expenses for keeping up an army, but instead of doing so they dismiss most of the soldiers and pocket the money, and in case of an emergency they call in any rabble who are willing to live upon half-pay. Such men as these the people have the greatest contempt for, and instead of deterring the people they only make them more furious. For a district containing upwards of two millions of people there are only thirty-three of these miserable creatures to keep order, so that whatever treaties foreign nations make with this country there can be no security for life or property while the army continues as it is at the present time. To-day we may be in safety, to-morrow we may be all in eternity so far as protection is concerned. Knowing that the mob could break into the yamun any time they wished, I slept very little that night.

Early the next morning, before break of day, I left the city, accompanied by a few of those so-called soldiers. We had hardly proceeded two miles along the road when the old matchlocks were deposited safely in a little inn to wait the return of the veteran guard. Considering they had no ammunition I thought they were wise in doing so. When we arrived at another inn they began to call out for opium, without which they could not possibly move on. We travelled thirty miles that day, and at four o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at Chui Kau.

For two or three years the city of Ku-Cheng continued to show but little interest in the Gospel message; but, though itself preferring darkness to light, it became, like Lo-Nguong, a centre of light to surrounding villages. Not that there were no converts in the city. Ten adult baptisms were reported in 1872, and sixteen in 1873; and in the latter year Mr. Mahood wrote, "Some of the people who were once the chief opponents of Christianity in this great heathen city are now publishing abroad the tidings of salvation." But in his report for 1874, Mr. Mahood was able to speak in a very different tone of Ku-

Cheng. It had been a year of remarkable progress. Upwards of a hundred persons, mostly Buddhists, in the city or immediate neighbourhood, had joined the city congregation, and twenty-eight had been baptized. It is interesting also to read such a passage as this :—

Last year we found at Ku-Cheng, owing to the way in which Christianity was spreading from place to place, that it was impossible for the catechist to visit all the people, and instruct them sufficiently in the Word of God. To meet that difficulty, we selected from the congregation six of the most devoted and intelligent young men to act as unpaid preachers, who, when they had time, were expected to visit the different villages, to instruct the Christians, and to exhort others to flee from the wrath to come. We find this year that by their instrumentality many have renounced idolatry, and are now trusting in Jesus. This year, at our annual meeting at Ku-Cheng, four more young men were recommended by the congregation as suitable persons to act as unpaid helpers. So that in this way the Lord is raising up men to assist in preaching the Gospel without receiving any pay for so doing. In fact, our great desire is to make all our Christians work for Christ, for we feel assured that the vast work to be done amongst these millions of heathen people will never be accomplished if it depends upon the efforts of a few paid helpers.

In a large village about five miles distant from Ku-Cheng the work of God seems to be making marked progress. Last year a man from that place heard the Gospel preached at Ku-Cheng, and soon after he renounced idolatry, and opened his house to us for preaching. We availed ourselves of this privilege, and made an arrangement to send one of the Christians from Ku-Cheng every Sunday to instruct the people in the Holy Scripture; and I am thankful to say that since then twenty-five persons have embraced Christianity, and I hope we may soon be able to establish a chapel there. Tens of places are opening up to us for the preaching of the Gospel, but our great want is not being able yet to supply them with able teachers.

We give Mr. Hutchinson's account of his visit to Ku-Cheng in 1874 :—

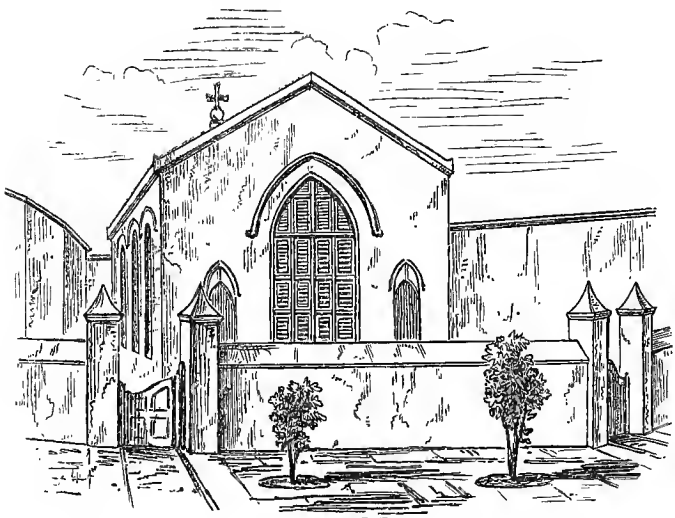
It was here about three years since that the mob arose on account of the genii powder excitement, and pulled down the house that served as chapel. The reparation made by the authorities has resulted in the erection of the

church, now recognised as one of the permanent institutions of the place. It is ten years since the first Christian was baptized here; and now there are forty-four already baptized, and over sixty candidates, twenty of whom are reported quite ready. The one first baptized met us; he is seventy years of age—a fine, hearty old man. He begged us to pray earnestly for his son, who will not yet believe. Another venerable Christian claimed attention, over eighty years of age—tall, stout, and vigorous. After evening prayer, at which many were present, we slipped out by the back door, which opens on to the walls, and strolled along, enjoying the unwonted quietness, gazing at the river and picturesque villages beyond, lighted up by the silver rays of full moon. We were glad that upon the moral darkness around us already were shining the rays of the Church of Christ, beautiful as the moon, reflecting with steadily increasing brightness the light of the true sun, the Sun of Righteousness.

Saturday, October 24th.—The man whose house had been injured near Sang-long succeeded this morning in presenting a petition to the mandarin as he was on his way to worship at the city temple (15th of Chinese moon), and thus saved the fee to the runners. He saw the mandarin yesterday, and applied for action to be taken to prevent persecution from his neighbours. The mandarin asked to what he belonged; he said the "Ang lik Kan" Church, *i.e.*, "Peace established in the midst," the name of our Church in Fuh-Kien province. Mandarin replied, "Better have peace, and no summons or litigation; but, if law must be invoked, send in indictment in proper form." In course of morning we went to present passports and pay our respects to the mandarin. Found him at home. Received us with much kindness in full official dress. A handsome man, about thirty-five apparently. He wore a velvet hat with peacock's feather and crystal ball, a jade thumb-ring, of which he seemed very proud. His Yamun was in cleaner condition than those previously visited. He asked many questions about the doctrine and its progress. His father frequently attends service at the church. By profession the family is Mohammedan. He spoke of the petition he had received, and promised to send some people down to quiet the neighbours. Tea was offered and accepted, and we left much pleased with the interview. The principal buildings of the Yamun appeared very old and ruinous, and so do many of the houses and temples in the city. The water is bad, owing to the wells being contaminated, and the surface so little raised above the river. In one of the temples we saw a new chair of blue silk, and banner of crimson silk, which the people have subscribed for to present to this

mandarin on account of the strict justice he has exhibited during the past half year. In the evening about twenty-five assembled for the Saturday evening prayer-meeting, specially on behalf of missions and missionaries. In each of the twenty-three stations and at Fuh-Chow the same sort of meeting was being held. Ten years since, such a thing undreamt of. What a change! Not only interest in personal salvation, but hearts and minds opening out to think of and pray for others.

Sunday, 25th.—This was to be our last Sunday in the country, but not



KU-CHENG CHURCH.

the least interesting. From an early hour visitors began to arrive, and glad communications were exchanged, with much talk. Some walked in from long distances. Amongst others, one smartly-dressed little boy, seven years old, had walked over seven English miles to church with the men of the family. Some of the Christians were well dressed; some were perceptibly poorer, but none appeared destitute. The poorest were workmen in regular employ. Over 160 were present at morning prayers, and most stayed during administration of Holy Communion, of which

seventeen men and six Chinese women reverently partook. Addresses were given during the day to congregations of varying numbers, and at evensong about seventy were present.

In the afternoon we walked round part of the walls, and were followed by a large number of boys; noticed many playing about, and very few girls. On asking a Christian who accompanied us how he accounted for the fact, he said the people kill the female infants at birth, partly to save expense, partly from the selfish feeling that, when a daughter has grown up and is a pleasure to her parents, some one will marry her, and they will lose her altogether; "and what is the good of that?" We asked, "Do they never kill the male infants?" and the reply was that to kill a boy would be looked upon with the greatest horror. How true the description of old, "without natural affection!"

During the last two years the progress of the work at Ku-Cheng has continued to be most encouraging. When Mr. Mahood, after his long journey to Wan-chow, was about to leave for England in consequence of the sunstroke he had received, he felt keenly the parting with the Christians of this city, whose consistent character and affection for himself had endeared them to him. Alas! he never saw them again. But Mr. Wolfe's subsequent reports have shown how little God's work depends on the life of one man. At the end of 1875 he writes, "The Lord has been working mightily at Ku-Cheng. For years it seemed a barren field, but now it has arisen from the dust, and is putting on its beautiful garments. Forty-two were added to the city congregation this year by baptism." And in April, 1876, "We have had to enlarge the church to accommodate the numbers that come. It seats now over three hundred, and every seat is occupied, and many have to stand about the doors. In addition, I have been compelled to open a second chapel in this city, and this also is every day filled with inquirers."

Bishop Burdon's account of his visit to Ku-Cheng in May, 1876, is equally encouraging:—

The most public reception I had was in the city called in the Fuh-Chow

dialect, Ku-Cheng—in mandarin Ku Tien (ancient field). This is a walled city, and is the place where the mob of rustics who seized Mahood in the country led him for trial, and, as they thought, for execution also. The largest number of Christians is connected with this place, and about one hundred of them came outside the gate to meet and welcome me. To my horror they had provided a large mandarin sedan chair, with four bearers, into which they begged me to enter, that I might be carried in it through the city to the chapel. What could I do? Shades of missionary fault-finders rose before my eyes as I exchanged my humble travelling chair for this more official one; but I could not see that I or any one else had reason to complain. No other harm could come from the proceeding than bringing the attention of the people on the Christians. No prerogatives of the magistrates were interfered with. The people stood quietly at their doors and windows to see me pass, and they had a good look at me, as the sides of the upper half of the sedan were composed of glass windows. On arriving at the chapel, which has only lately been enlarged, and is now the largest chapel in the whole mission (the chapels in the City of Fuh-Chow, I think, included), it was at once filled from end to end with Christians and heathen. The little house, too, for the native deacon, behind the chapel, was filled to overflowing, and it was difficult to find a resting-place. I thought it best to get into the pulpit, and, after saying a few words to them in mandarin, which were interpreted by the Christian schoolmaster, I told them that I had come a great distance that day, and was both tired and hungry, and should be obliged to them if they would now go home and come back at another time. To my amazement, and that of Mr. Wolfe, the crowd quietly dispersed, and though we had to do almost everything in presence of a number of people, yet we had comparatively a quiet time for the rest of the evening. I thought my whole reception in this city a remarkable thing. The people were most respectful in demeanour, and the only word I heard as I passed through the streets was a remark, *sotto voce*, on my *great* age! I do not suppose this innocent recognition of the Bishop by the Christians can do the smallest harm, and at all events it showed that in one of the chief cities where Christianity has obtained a footing inland from Fuh-Chow, the Christians were not ashamed of drawing attention to themselves.

But, as elsewhere in the province, success and trial at Ku-Cheng have come together. The very letter, already quoted,

in which Mr. Wolfe refers to the enlargement of the church, mentions that the Christians there had been severely beaten because they would not worship at the ancestral groves, and that some had been robbed of their "paternal property." It is just the story of the early Church at Jerusalem over again. When "multitudes both of men and women" believe, then it is that the great adversary stirs up opposition. May our defrauded and plundered brethren, like the Hebrew believers of primitive days, "take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they have in heaven a better and an enduring substance!"

'Tis the same story still,
Of sin and weariness,
Of grace and love still flowing down
To pardon and to bless.

'Tis the old sorrow still,—
The briar and the thorn;
And 'tis the same old solace yet—
The hope of coming morn.

No wider is the gate,
No broader is the way,
No smoother is the ancient path
That leads to light and day.

No lighter is the load
Beneath whose weight we cry,
No tamer grows the rebel flesh,
Nor less our enemy.

No sweeter is the cup,
Nor less our lot of ill;
'Twas tribulation ages since,
'Tis tribulation still.

Bonar.

CHAPTER XVI.

VILLAGES ROUND KU-CHENG.

Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.—*Acts* ii. 19, 21.

He first findeth his own brother Simon; . . . and he brought him to Jesus.—*St. John* i. 42.

Praise to Thee for saved ones yearning
O'er the lost and wandering throng;
Praise for voices daily learning
To upraise the glad new song.

Praise to Thee for sick ones hasting
Now to touch Thy garment's hem;
Praise for souls, believing, tasting,
All Thy love has won for them.

S. G. Stock.

AS in the cases of Lo-Nguong and Ning-Taik, so in the case of Ku-Cheng, the largest results of the preaching of the Gospel have been, not in the city, but in the surrounding villages. At more than one of the out-stations attached to Ku-Cheng as a centre there have been signal examples of the power of Divine grace.

Perhaps the most remarkable instances have occurred at ANG-IONG, a village sixteen miles from Ku-Cheng. A carpenter, named Ngoi Cheng Tung, heard the good news of a Saviour proclaimed by the catechist at the city chapel. He believed the message at once, and persuaded his half-brother

Ung-Kung, a tailor, to "come and see," or rather to come and *hear*, likewise, and was quickly rewarded by his conversion. The two men spoke to a third, a dweller in another village, who forthwith came and lived with Ung-Kung for a while in order to be more fully instructed in the faith, and then went forth in his turn to tell others of the Saviour he had found. The result was that on visiting the village Mr. Cribb found the carpenter working as an evangelist, and the tailor—a quiet and thoughtful man—as an instructor of those whom his brother's exhortations brought together. Both these men were baptized by Bishop Alford when he visited Ku-Cheng in 1868, and confirmed at his second visit in 1871.

Through the agency of these two remarkable men, the infant Church at Ang-Iong grew and flourished. Mr. Mahood thus writes of them and their work at the end of 1870:—

At Ang-Iong, through the unceasing efforts and pious example of a carpenter and a tailor, who were converted some years since to Christianity, the work of God seems to make rapid progress. The carpenter, before he was baptized, was so desirous of obtaining a knowledge of the Christian religion, that every Saturday he walked a distance of about thirty miles to join the people of God in worship at Ku-Cheng on Sunday, returning on Monday to his usual employment. By his conversation and consistent example he influenced the tailor to embrace Christianity and to forsake sin. The latter, ever since his baptism, has devoted every spare moment to endeavouring to bring others to the light in which he himself rejoices. The consequence is, that not only has he spread the Gospel in the village where he lives, but in all the villages around, varying from ten to twenty miles in distance, there are whole families who profess the Christian faith, and are being instructed in the doctrines of the Bible.

The great secret of the success of the carpenter and tailor is, that in the first instance their hearts were truly changed by the Spirit of God. By faith in the crucified Redeemer they obtained that peace which passeth understanding, and their delight is to make others happy too. The catechist, when he saw the work that was going on, said to me, "This is something real. One man like the tailor is worth a hundred ordinary

believers, who merely profess Christ without showing any love for Him by their lives." The chief theme of his conversation from morning till night is the love of God as manifested in sending Christ to save sinners. When those around him begin to talk about worldly things he has a happy way of always turning them back to the conversation about their souls' salvation. No precious time is lost by him in foolish gossip. The only thing he knows amongst men is Christ and Him crucified.

I had the extreme pleasure at Ang-Iong of admitting into the visible Church of Christ by baptism five adults, who for the past three years, regardless of the threats and frowns of the heathen around them, have observed the Sabbath, meeting in worship both morning and evening. When asked what they would do, supposing the Emperor would hereafter persecute them because they had forsaken the faith of their forefathers, the answer was, "The Emperor can only kill the body, but God can kill both soul and body; therefore we ought to fear God rather than the Emperor." There are also fourteen other adult inquirers and twenty children in the same village who have for the past twelve months made a profession of their faith in Christ; but their baptism I postponed until they receive further instruction in the Word of God. They are now raising funds amongst themselves to contribute towards the general welfare of the Mission in other places, and the old carpenter has first shown the example by contributing about one-tenth of his annual earnings.

I must confess I myself received a great deal of benefit by spending a day with the Christians of Ang-Iong. We had a general prayer-meeting with the converts in the evening, after the five adults were baptized, and a more solemn, earnest prayer-meeting I never attended. Some wept with joy, whilst others poured forth their petitions to God for the outpouring of His Spirit upon the poople around.

The Shin-sin-fan persecution in 1871, before alluded to,* fell heavily upon the Christians of Ang-Iong. They were driven from their homes, and their lives were in constant danger for some weeks; yet none forsook the faith of Christ. Ngoi Cheng Tung was expelled from the village; but he took refuge at another, and while there persuaded the family he lodged with to throw away their idols and worship Christ.

* See pp. 56, 202.

It was at Ang-Iong that Mr. Mahood was attacked during these troubles, and that he afterwards visited the leading persecutors and partook of tea with them, as already mentioned.

At the close of this year Mr. Mahood reports that no less than fifty persons in Ang-Iong and other places had embraced Christianity in consequence of the efforts of Ngoi Cheng Tung. And his firmness in keeping holy the Lord's Day communicated itself to those whom he influenced. One poor man earned a precarious living by preparing charcoal for the Fuh-Chow market, at which he worked every day all the year round. When he became a Christian, he found he could not do enough in six days to support himself for a week, and to meet the difficulty, he sat up late at night making baskets to hold the charcoal, thus adding the necessary trifle to his means of subsistence.

Mr. Hutchinson, while at Ku-Cheng, met Ngoi Cheng Tung, whom he describes as "a wiry, active, earnest little man," and who hastened round the country to tell the scattered Christian families that the missionary and his friend had arrived at the city. In his Report for this year, 1873, Mr. Mahood says:—

> Our work is also still progressing at Ang-Iong. Christianity is overcoming the superstitions of heathenism, so that in that very village where the people, a few years ago, were the very slaves of their idols, the doors of the heathen temple are seldom opened; and, in the course of a year, there is hardly a devotee to be seen prostrating himself at the shrine of Buddha. This year the Christians have collected the money that formerly belonged to their ancestral worship, and have given it to rebuild the chapel that was partly destroyed two years ago. The Christian carpenter who was instrumental in the hand of God in introducing Christianity into that place is still as zealous as ever in spreading the glad tidings of salvation to other places, and in warning the people to flee from the wrath to come. There were five adults baptized at Ang-Iong this year, and there is every sign of a much greater increase before long.

A few months later Mr. Mahood writes: "The congregation

at Ang-Iong has increased from thirty to sixty, and Buddhism has almost ceased to exist in the village." One of the converts was no other than the instigator of the riot during the Shin-sin-fan disturbance three years before, a leading man in the place, who had hounded on the people to pull down the chapel and had threatened Mr. Mahood's life. This year, 1874, the arrows of the great King were sharp in the heart of His enemy, and the bitter opponent humbled himself at the feet of Jesus, and became a most zealous Christian. "When," writes Mr. Mahood, "I heard that man blaspheming against God and threatening our lives, I could not have believed that within three years I should have the great privilege of baptizing him and his child."

In the Report for 1875, which gives this touching incident, the old carpenter is referred to as "just as active as ever," and as having travelled this year to the most distant parts of the province to tell the people of redeeming love. He was received very kindly, and when his money was spent they offered him food to supply his wants." There is also the following account of the death of one of the Ang-Iong converts :—

One of our most earnest Christians at Ang-Iong was called this year to his final rest. This young man, about four years ago, by the Holy Spirit's influence was led, after a hard struggle with conscience, to renounce the idolatrous worship of his forefathers, and having, by a godly life, given evidence of real repentance and faith in Christ Jesus, he was baptized the following year.

From that time he became most anxious to lead his friends and neighbours to the same Fountain in which he had been cleansed from his sins. Whenever he had an opportunity, whether walking by the wayside or labouring in the fields, he bore testimony to the truth of God's Word, and urged others to repent and look to Christ for salvation. Having had but a poor, miserable knowledge of reading, I invited him to our boarding-school at Fuh-Chow, and before long he was able to read the New Testament, and some of the books in the Old Testament. Afterwards he

returned to his home, and, having acquired a better knowledge of the Bible, he visited many of the neighbouring villages, and exhorted the people to cast away their idols, and to look unto God only for the salvation of their souls.

Not long after this he had a severe attack of illness, which left him feeble and emaciated; but even in his weakness he tried to visit the nearest villages, so that he might speak for Christ. Sometimes the heathen people would say to him, "You worship the God of heaven, but why does He permit you to be sick and feeble?" To this he would answer: "God is holy and just; it is on account of sin that sickness and death have come into the world; but in love God takes His people from this wearisome world to live with Him in glory." The taunts and temptations of the wicked one were unable to draw him from his Saviour; and a short time before his death he told me that he never felt so happy in his life as he did then with the expectation of living with the redeemed in glory. In speaking to me he said: "I feel assured that my sins are washed away by Christ's most precious blood; and now that Jesus is about to call me to a happier land, I am satisfied that His will should be done;" and when his last moments came, clinging to Christ with strong faith, he passed away in peace.

The latest news from Ang-Iong is contained in a letter from Mr. Wolfe, dated April, 1876. He says: "There are now two hundred under instruction at this place, and the little chapel which had been begun by Mr. Mahood and recently finished by myself, and planned to hold a hundred and fifty, cannot accommodate all who regularly attend." Among those lately baptized are two men who, like the convert mentioned above, were leaders in the attack on Mr. Mahood at the time of the Shan-sin-fan riots. On the occasion of their baptism, one of them said, "I was blind, and the child of the devil, when I wanted to kill Mr. Mahood, but God has had compassion on me and opened my eyes, because I did it ignorantly." This man was brought to Christ by the dying words of his son, who had been one of Mr. Mahood's converts.

The catechist at Ang-Iong, as already mentioned, is the young man Sia Seu-Ong, who was the first convert at A-chia,

and who had the remarkable dream. He is a devoted man, and will, we trust, shortly be admitted to holy orders.

Among the villages named to which the story of the Cross has been carried from Ang-Iong, are Puang-tau, Puang-lang, Sang-po-chai, and Pu-tau. PUANG-LANG is remarkable for a widow—a woman of influence and better education than most of her sex in China—who embraced the faith of Christ in 1869. During the Shin-sin-fan disturbances she was exposed to great annoyances. At one time a mob surrounded her house and threatened to destroy her property if she did not renounce Christianity. She took the Bible in her hand, and standing at the door, said, "This book teaches us the religion which foreigners believe; that same religion I believe. No one who believes this religion can possibly be guilty of the acts of which Christians are now accused, and sooner than give up the religion of Christ I would cheerfully permit the officers to behead me." She was not further molested; but two years afterwards she fell ill and died. Most remarkable is the account of her end:—

> For two days she lay speechless. Afterwards she recovered, to the great joy of all her friends, and in a few days was able to visit the neighbouring villages. She then began most earnestly to exhort the people to renounce heathenism and to embrace Christ as their only Saviour. Crowds of people flocked to hear her, and many wept as she exhorted them to repent and flee from the wrath to come. For a month after her recovery she went from village to village, exhorting the people to cast away their idols, and to look unto Jesus as their only hope. After this her strength began to fail, but still she persevered in proclaiming Christ unto the people; and at last, full of joy and hope, without a sigh or pain, she fell asleep in Jesus. Her triumphant death has been the means of strengthening many of the feebler Christians in the faith of Christ.

But, "being dead," she "yet spake." "Before she died," Mr. Mahood writes, in the following year, "her son and grand-



CHINESE CATECHIST SHOWING BOOKS.

child were hardened idolaters. She prayed fervently for their conversion, but before the answer was given she had gone to her heavenly home. Since her death both have been led to embrace Christianity, and are now rejoicing in Christ."

SANG-PO-CHAI is further westward still, and being somewhat out of the ordinary routes, the Christians were at first left to themselves; but one or two of them had learned at Ang-Iong how to use the Bible and the Prayer-book, and they met Sunday by Sunday for such common prayer and mutual exhortation as they could manage. At length Ung-Kung, the tailor of Ang-Iong, who had now given himself up wholly to the service of the Mission, was sent there to act as catechist. At the end of 1873 Mr. Mahood reports:—

At Sang-po-chai I have been encouraged very much this year in seeing the progress the Christians have made in the knowledge of the Word of God. In the evenings, when the day's work is over, the Christians assemble in the little chapel to read the Scriptures and to pray. Ung-Kung, the brother of the Christian carpenter at Ang-Iong, is now acting as catechist there, and he seems to live in an atmosphere of piety. He has induced the old men as well as the children in the congregation to learn to read the Holy Scriptures, so that now there are men sixty and seventy years of age able to read the Bible who never read before. For miles around that village the heathen people respect the Christians there as an upright people. The money contributed by that little congregation this year for the support of the native helpers has been much more, in proportion to the number of the Christians, than has been collected at any of our other stations.

A remarkable conversion of a young man, a bigoted Buddhist, took place there this year. The mother of this young man and two of his brothers joined our Church three years ago, and since then they have proved themselves consistent Christians. When they joined the Church the youngest brother, then only twenty-two years of age, was terribly enraged. He thought that to embrace Christianity would bring certain destruction on their family. For some time he hardly spoke to any person in the house; but during that time his mother and brothers ceased

not to offer up fervent prayer on his behalf that God might change his wicked heart. Two years ago, when reports were circulated amongst the people that the foreigners were poisoning the wells, and were employing the native Christians to help them, this young man looked upon his brothers with intense hatred, and even sought their destruction. This year, to the great delight of the family, he has been led as an humble suppliant to the foot of the cross. A short time ago, at one of our prayer-meetings at Ku-Cheng, he wept most bitterly when he thought of the past; and at the same time he rejoiced in Christ his Saviour that he was delivered from the superstitions of his forefathers. In narrating some of his past experience to me, he said, "Sir, two years ago, when you asked me to believe in Christ, I was filled with hatred towards you, and I wished you dead. I felt like St. Paul when he went to persecute the Christians, I wished them all dead; but now I love you for bringing us the glad tidings of salvation, and I love the Christians; and, above all, I delight to honour the name of Him whom I once despised."

By the end of 1874, there were forty-three Christians at Sang-po-chai. Ung-Kung, "by his walk and conversation," was "leading them nearer and nearer to the Fountain of Life." On the occasion of Mr. Mahood's last visit before starting on the voyage he was not to live to complete, this devoted Chinese brother, with tears rolling down his cheeks, said, "Sing-sang, I am afraid I shall never see you again, as I feel my own strength failing; but thanks be to God, we have a glorious hope of immortality, for when this earthly house is dissolved, we have a building of God eternal in the heavens."

In the Report for 1873, Mr. Mahood mentions that five villages had been influenced from Ku-Cheng that year. One of these was SIU-KEK, fifteen miles off. Eleven persons there had thrown aside their idols and professed Christianity. Another, not named, was a *lepers' village*, where all the lepers in the district are compelled to live. They numbered in that year, when Mr. Mahood visited the place, no less than sixty.

Their sufferings from the loathsome plague were extreme, and it was with peculiar pleasure and thankfulness that he found several who had been led to seek Christ as their Saviour through the self-denying efforts of a Ku-Cheng Christian, who had taken up his abode among them. "Although," he writes, "the Lord is not here to heal their bodily disease, His Spirit is present to heal their souls."

Another place of deep interest near Ku-Cheng is LO-A, or LAU-WA. The first mention of it is in Mr. Hutchinson's narrative of his tour in 1874:—

At last we arrived at Lau-Wa. Here, some four or five months since, a few people who had become inquirers began to walk in regularly on Sundays to Ku-Cheng to attend service. About two months since all the members of the head family save one believed, about thirty people altogether becoming thus decided Christians. It was resolved that they hold Divine service in the village three Sundays in the month, the other Sunday going into the city, a distance of about eight miles. This head family lend their upper story for the purpose. To them we paid our first visit. The house is a new one, grandly ornamented with handsome carving, roomy and lofty, and everywhere bearing marks of well-to-do comfort—the house of a Chinese gentleman farmer. Although not yet opened as a station, a catechist or Christian comes out each Sunday to conduct Divine service, and a book of attendance is kept, which shows at present forty-nine regularly coming. Whilst examining the book a good congregation assembled. The women of the house gathered together on one side in the background; the aged patriarch, more than eighty years of age, sat close by the pulpit desk, and young and old who could be spared from the harvest, between fifty and sixty altogether, sat or stood reverently round, listening to one after another of the addresses given, and finally kneeling around during prayer. It was a marvellous sight, when one thought of all that was implied by the scene before one. We were the first Europeans ever seen in this village; yet here was a whole family, and that the chief, all but one member ready for baptism; and not only so, but, without pay asked or expected, providing a room for prayer regularly for their neighbours. There on the screen where a few months before idols had been displayed,

and incense burnt before them, was now to be read of all men the Ten Commandments. Verily it were well worth coming all the 300 miles to see this family, named Ngoi, and the work of which their house is the centre. After we had eaten tiffin we again had preaching, singing, and prayers. All the women in the house are Christians, although not yet baptized. We set out to return, thanking God for all which we had heard and seen.

In the Report for 1875, Mr. Wolfe says: "At Lo-A I have baptized several, and forty or fifty have presented themselves as candidates for baptism." They had subscribed no less than 300 dollars towards the cost of a church, designed to hold 500 people, one member giving a third of that sum himself.

In the same Report we find the first mention of another place in the neighbourhood, TONG-LIANG. "Several interesting converts" had been gathered in, including the head man, who had given 200 dollars towards a church, besides subscribing liberally to the Lo-A church.

If the story of Lo-Nguong, A-chia, Ning-Taik, and the south-eastern district generally, is one of faithful and patient labour on the part of the regular Native agents of the Mission, the story of the Ku-Cheng or north-western district is peculiarly an illustration of the spontaneous efforts of voluntary workers. Assuredly the labourer is worthy of his hire; and yet, when we find that Ku-Cheng and the surrounding villages, though at first unfruitful, are now, in 1876, the most advanced and hopeful field in the whole Mission, we cannot but reflect what the Church of Christ all over the world might do if only its true members would throw themselves, one and all, and each in his own sphere, into the Lord's work. Especially if, as Andrew first found his own brother Simon, and as Ngoi

Cheng-Tung first found his half-brother Ung-Kung, preaching and teaching, as well as charity, *began at home.*

When brothers part for manhood's race,
  What gift may most endearing prove
To keep fond memory in her place,
  And certify a brother's love?

* * * * *

Who art thou, that would'st grave thy name
  Thus deeply in a brother's heart?
Look on this saint, and learn to frame
  Thy love-charm with true Christian art.

First seek thy Saviour out, and dwell
  Beneath the shadow of His roof,
Till thou have scann'd His features well,
  And known Him for the Christ by proof.

Then potent with the spell of heaven,
  Go, and thine erring brother gain,
Entice him home to be forgiven,
  Till he, too, see his Saviour plain.

Or, if before thee in the race,
  Urge him with thine advancing tread,
Till, like twin stars, with even pace,
  Each lucid course be duly sped.

Keble, "Christian Year" (St. Andrew's Day).

CHAPTER XVII.

SANG-IONG—SEK-PAIK-TU—PING-NANG—CHUI-KAU.

He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.—*St. Matt.* xiii. 58.

Thou shalt speak My words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.—*Ezek.* ii. 7.

Wait on the Lord, and keep His way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land.—*Ps.* xxxvii. 34.

God doth not bid thee wait
To disappoint at last;
A golden promise, fair and great,
In precept mould is cast.
Thine eyes shall surely see—
No distant hope or dim—
The Lord thy God arise for thee;
Wait patiently for Him.

F. R. Havergal.

ALTHOUGH included in the north-western division of the Mission, SANG-IONG is in fact a connecting link between the two divisions, and lies half-way between their respective centres. It is forty miles travelling distance due west from Ku-Cheng, and forty miles west from either Lo-Nguong or Ning-Taik, the routes from these two cities to Ku-Cheng converging here. It lies in an upland hollow, nearly on the top of the watershed which divides the streams that flow in a south-easterly direction down the Lo-Nguong, Tang-Iong, and Lieng-Kong valleys direct into the Chinese Sea, from those which feed the upper waters of the Min.

Bishop Alford and Mr. Hutchinson both describe the routes to and from Sang-Iong; and taking them together, we can form a very clear idea of the nature of the country. Both approached the town from the east, the former from A-chia, and the latter from Sioh-Chuo. The Bishop found the long ascent from A-chia very trying. "The paths," he says, "are very bad; in many places they are simply rough stones, over which we pick our way as among boulders on the sea-shore. Two miles and a half an hour was good travelling." His journey on from Sang-Iong is thus described:—

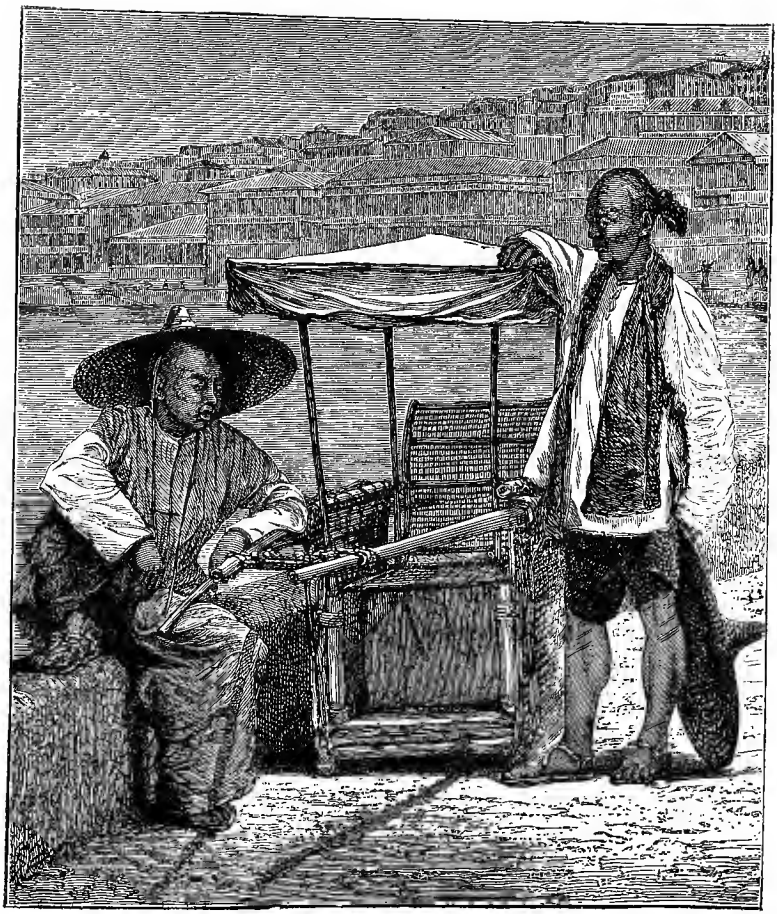
We were now on our way to Ku-Cheng, forty miles distant. The country was much the same as on previous days. We climbed steep ascents of 500 or 600 feet, chiefly on steps of stones—and then down again! The gorges and ravines were fine. It was curious to see steep hill-sides prepared almost to the summit for paddy or rice. The ground is divided into partitions by little walls of earth to keep the water on the surface of the soil for irrigation; and in some places hills 300 and 400 feet high look like puny fortifications with streams pouring out of conduits, whereby the water is conveyed from paddy-field to paddy-field all down the steep descent. It is a great rice district upon which we entered to-day. Yesterday we saw a great deal of tea-plant, which will only grow on rich, red, loamy soil. Rice seems to like the clay. The bamboo-groves are found on hill-sides by the ravines.

The ravines are sometimes crossed by planks on lofty platforms with no railing whatever. Some of these bridges are of considerable length, and the three or four narrow planks side by side vibrate alarmingly as they are traversed. I remember one bridge in particular which much alarmed me. It was perhaps 120 feet long and 70 feet high. I had not head to cross it. The coolies wanted to carry me over in the chair, but I did not fancy it. So I descended to the stream, and jumping from boulder to boulder, got safely across with only a wetting of my feet, which I thought preferable to the possible breaking of my neck.

My boots have already succumbed to the labour of the way. I tried to get straw-shoes, such as the Chinese wear, to fasten to the soles, but the device failed, and I am now travelling in an old pair of shoes sadly too thin for the protection of my feet; I fear I may be shoeless by the time I reach Chuikow on Wednesday night.

We had our mid-day meal to-day in a turmoil. The people of this neighbourhood had never seen three foreigners together before, and to see them eat and use knife and fork and spoon, and drink out of a tumbler, was too great a rarity not to excite the utmost curiosity. The wayside inn where we stopped was soon thronged, and the crowd in the street struggled to get in. Nor did there appear much chance of a meal, for the people would pull our things about to inspect them, if not to steal them. We retreated to an inner back-room, guarded in the rear by a paddy-field under water; but the crowd assembled on the opposite bank, while others opened the mat-sides of our little apartment to stare and make their observations. Mr. Cribb remonstrated, and asked for quietude; but the crowd in their turn remonstrated, urging that they had never seen "foreigners" eat before, and might never have another chance, and *ought*, therefore, to be allowed to make the most of it! The curiosity of the people is unbounded, and sometimes very rude and wearisome. They seem to think themselves "welcome" anywhere at any time. The opportunity of preaching to the crowd is great indeed in this part of China.

As evening approached we found ourselves on the top of a high hill. I think we must have footed 600 stone steps. Thence we descended a long deep valley with a torrent brawling at the foot of the rocks, the path running round them like a narrow ledge. Yet this is an important high-road of China, corresponding, for instance, to that which joins Sheffield and Doncaster, or other important towns. We have not seen a horse or any animal carrying burdens. The only animals we meet are snarling, yelping dogs, which, as we pass through a village, sometimes make a rush at us, but, on being faced, turn tail and fly; and a buffalo may occasionally be seen turning up the soil to the sharp cry of the farmer. The coolies are the beasts of burden in this part of China. And wonderful carriers they are! My three chair-coolies, though they take care not to carry me up a hill (for in that case they exact a penalty similar to that of being tossed in a blanket), carry the chair (a heavy burden) and myself over level ground at a sort of jog-trot, and have to-day made about thirty miles. They often say they want their rice, and pat their stomachs, but seldom complain of being weary. We continually pass long strings of coolies on the road, carrying, on a bamboo stick across the shoulder, tea, salt, rice, lead, iron—burdens one of us could hardly lift from the ground. As night approached we looked anxiously for the best accommodation to be found. At the better-looking private houses we got no



CHINESE SEDAN CHAIR.

welcome; we were twice rudely repulsed. It became very dark, and things did not look pleasant. The first inn that offered we were obliged to enter; and we three occupied a loft worse than any garret I ever saw. Thick and black was the dirt and grime. And, oh, the fleas and worse! Then there were some fifteen coolies below, some cooking rice, others smoking opium, and others snoring, and their savour did not add a relish to our food. There was no chimney through which the wood-smoke could find its way, and our eyes ran down with tears. It was almost too much for us; but we did get through the night, the snores of the Chinamen below not being quite as bad as the barking of the dogs the previous night.

Easter Tuesday, 1871.—I believe I did sleep from pure exhaustion. I was awake before daylight, but how long I cannot say, for there was little possibility of rest. Right glad was I to see a ray of light piercing the cracks in the tiles above my head. On saying a word I found Mr. Cribb and Robert both awake, and as soon as we could see to move we were all three down in the open street, where, after an airing, we performed our ablutions, showing a crowd of some fifty Chinamen how we washed our faces, brushed our teeth, combed our hair, which two latter operations always elicit exclamations of surprise, as also that the water should be cold; for cold water the Chinaman abhors. A cup of tea and a biscuit, and we got our coolies on the way soon after six, and we reached Ku-Cheng about 10.30 A.M.

Mr. Hutchinson's narrative is not less graphic :—

We pushed on through a fine ravine, steadily ascending. Gradually the villages became fewer. Grand mountains rose on every side; woods, valleys, waterfalls—all were below us; every turn in the path revealed new beauties, rivalling the wildest scenery of Cumberland. We were the first Europeans to travel over this route. At last, descending at sunset through a magnificent ravine, we saw in the distance below us the little town of Sang-Iong. . . .

After a hurried breakfast, set out from Sang-Iong for Ku-Cheng. The scenery once more reminded us of Lynton valley; for more than six miles we were passing through a lovely glen, with lofty heights above and a fine mountain stream down below, rushing and foaming over the rocks. The road in places was almost destroyed, owing to landslips occasioned by disastrous floods a few weeks before. Many lives had been lost in the highlands, and acres of paddy-fields were destroyed by the

wreckage and earth brought down by the river. At last the ravine opened out into a fertile valley, guarded on both sides by mountain ramparts, the precipitous sides of the heights being clothed with fir and thick underwood. Passed several villages nestled at the foot of the hills, at a little distance from the main track which we were following. At last we entered the village of Sa-Iong, where we stopped for our mid-day meal.

Pursuing our way, found that the river had committed sad havoc, carrying away bridges and solitary houses, and laying waste many fair fields. The stream was still rapid; sometimes we crossed the numerous windings, seated in our chairs, with the water nearly up to the coolies' waists. Once we had to dismount and take a series of jumps from one to another of the big rocks, tumbled about in the river-bed, the coolies forming a chain to prevent accidents. A large bridge had been entirely destroyed, and the stream foamed around the rocks as if it would fain carry these off also. Evening was now coming on, and the rain came down steadily. More landslips delayed us; the paths were increasingly slippery; climbing was slow work; till at last, as daylight was fading, we found ourselves at the summit of a mountain-pass, and no sign of habitation near. Presently a light appeared, brought by one of the catechists, and half an hour afterwards we were safely housed from rain, cold, and darkness.

It was a strange scene. The building was a mere cowshed, built against the rock, with a sloping roof, and an upper story, reached by steps cut out of the rock. The one apartment down-stairs held us all. A roaring fire lighted up the gloom, and supplied also the hot water, into which all were plunging their feet—catechists, coolies, pigs, dogs, fowls, all were mixed together—whilst our chairs, brought in for shelter, still further narrowed the space. However, we managed to make a good supper, notwithstanding the personal inspection of our fare by the landlord, who smelt curiously at a sausage until informed that that was not according to our notion of the rites. A perfect Babel of sounds was only quieted by the retirement of the coolies to the upper room for their night's rest; but for a long time after they still continued shouting and talking, and quarrelling, repeatedly kicking the pigs away from under the dining-table; and being weary of the smoke, which, as there was no chimney, diffused itself impartially on all sides, we ascended the steps, and found a narrow space reserved for us in the midst of a thin mat partition, separating us from six or eight coolies on one side, and ten or twelve on the

other. We found next morning, on comparing notes, that we had accomplished thirty-three miles of travelling; and, as we looked back up the ravine which we had descended in the dark, were truly thankful that no accident had befallen us.

Thursday, October 22nd.—Our way still lay through the same ravine, alternately ascending and descending—now along the brink of yawning precipices, giving peeps into romantic glens, now through avenues of forest trees, the river below all making grand harmony as it rushed along, breaking wildly over the rocks, forming a series of miniature cascades. Another long picturesque ascent brought us at last to the rest-house overlooking Ku-Cheng.

Sang-Iong is a walled city of about ten thousand people. It is a thriving place, and the centre of a fruitful tea district. It was taken up as a Mission station, "in answer," as Mr. Cribb observes, "to the call, Come over and help us, made by travellers from the place." In November, 1867, he visited the town, dressed in Chinese costume, in order to obtain a preaching-room and get the agreement for its letting settled, without attracting the notice of the people generally. This was successfully accomplished, and a catechist named Sieu-Sing was located there. In the following February, Mr. Cribb paid another visit to the place. This time his coming was announced by the catechist, and an extraordinary reception awaited him :—

Long ere I reached the town gate I observed the boys running from the fields to the town as if to communicate the news of my arrival, though they were much too far off to identify me, especially being in native dress, and on reaching the spot I found that such was the case. The colour of my chair-cover being blue had, it appears, betrayed me. Most of the chairs which you hire along the road are covered only with a sheet of varnished paper uncoloured. They therefore guessed that the blue chair must have come from Fuh-Chow, and that it contained the expected visitor; and great was their delight when they found that they had conjectured rightly. On approaching the street in which the chapel is situate we found an immense crowd assembled to get a glimpse of me as I entered. The chapel, too, was full to such an extent that we could

scarcely find room upon which to place my baskets of provisions, clothing, &c. Being fatigued and hungry, I allowed the people to gaze at me but for a few minutes, and then requested them to disperse for a short time, promising that when I was refreshed a little I would come out and talk to them. Many said my request was only reasonable, having just come off a journey, and accordingly withdrew, but many more who had not seen me came rushing to the spot, and would not be persuaded to depart. They stood outside hammering at the door and shutters, requesting to be admitted, till at last, fearing that in their eagerness to see me they might damage the house, I hastily finished my dinner, and, accompanied by the catechist, went out to them, requesting them to come with us to the theatre, the chapel being much too small to accommodate so many. I need scarcely say a general rush was made towards the spot, many screaming to their neighbours as they passed to hasten thither. On entering the building the excitement of the people was intense. The boys, with a noise almost deafening, danced around me in a frantic state. For some time I could not venture to speak, as it was quite impossible for me to be heard. At length one of the noisy rascals came rather closer to me than was agreeable, so I seized him and led him to a company of old men who were standing a few yards distant, and said, "Venerable fathers, I have come here to speak to you on very important matters, but these boys are so rude and noisy that, unless you rebuke them, I shall not be able to say a word." With true Chinese politeness, the old gentlemen turned round and rebuked the boys, saying, "Don't you know the rules of etiquette better than to disturb a foreign stranger thus?" This produced instant silence, and, seizing the opportunity, I mounted a few steps so that all could see me, and commenced to address them.

At first, of course, I had to answer innumerable questions relative to my "distinguished country," my "exalted surname," and my "honourable age," and also to reply to some covetous persons who asked whether it is true that foreigners having green eyes (as they called mine) could see several feet through the earth and could discover the "precious things" buried in the hills. After these preliminaries, I explained to them the object of my visit. I told them that I had come to point them to a treasure more precious than thousands of gold and silver, and that for this purpose we had rented a house, and placed a native in charge of it who would be glad to explain to all who would listen the doctrines of our Saviour Jesus. I then gave an epitome of the leading doctrines of the Gospel, and exhorted them to go daily to the catechist to inquire more fully into these matters.



A PUBLIC APOLOGY AT SANG-IONG.

When I had concluded, a few more questions were asked, chiefly relating to what I had been saying, such as "Can we see God?" "Is He visible in England?" "How are we certified of His existence?"

After answering these the catechist preached for about twenty minutes. We then returned to the chapel by a circuitous route in order to give the crowd an opportunity of dispersing. During the evening several elderly neighbours came in to see the "foreign teacher." I preached to them for about an hour, after which I laid myself open to answer all their inquiries. Visitors continued to pour in during the whole of the next day, so much so that I found it difficult to make arrangements for repairing the house, which is in a very dilapidated state. I was much pleased with the general appearance of the Sang-Iong people; they seem more candid and straightforward than the majority of their fellow-countrymen in these parts, among whom they have a high character for equity. It is stated that they never go to law before the mandarins, but that in the event of a dispute arising among themselves they refer it to the elders of the town, who decide the matter as common sense dictates.

Notwithstanding this hopeful beginning, Sang-Iong was for a long time a comparatively barren field, and a good deal of opposition was displayed to the catechist's work. At one time stones were thrown at the windows and on to the roof day by day; and on the catechist complaining to the magistrate and pointing out the chief offender, the latter not only denied the charge, but took the earliest opportunity of disproving his own denial by breaking into the chapel, destroying the seats, and damaging the walls. Mr. Cribb, on his next visit to Sang-Iong, appealed to the elders; and they illustrated the reputation of the town for equity (alluded to above) by requiring the offender to repair the damage and also make a public apology. The manner in which such an apology is offered in that part of China is very curious:—

A piece of red cloth, about twenty feet long, is presented to the injured party, together with two large candles, and a couple of strings of crackers. The cloth is hung in a conspicuous place, and the candles lighted and placed on a table near the front of the house, and then the crackers are

ignited and held by some one in front of the street-door, the noise of the continuous explosion of which attracts the notice of the neighbours, and informs them that the difficulty, of whatever nature it may have been, has been satisfactorily settled, and that peace and harmony have been restored between the parties concerned.

A few converts came in one by one, enough at all events to suffer persecution during the Shin-sin-fan riots in 1871, when the chapel was torn down and the catechist had to fly for his life. One of the Christians on this occasion displayed remarkable courage. He was attacked by an infuriated mob, who threatened to murder him if he did not drink a mixture which they gave him for a test to see whether he had poisoned the wells. When they presented the cup to him he refused it and said, "If you wish to kill me you can do so, for I am quite at your mercy; but as I have been guilty of no crime, I shall not drink this cup. I believe in Christ, who is the Saviour of sinners, and I would rather suffer death from your hands than give up that faith." He was robbed of his clothes, and had to endure great annoyances. But all testified to his unwavering faith in Christ.

Two years later, Mr. Mahood reports decided progress at Sang-Iong—more inquirers and less opposition. Yet Mr. Hutchinson in the same year speaks unfavourably of what he saw. But the catechist, Ching-Mi, faithfully toiled on, and the promise, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days," has not failed at Sang-Iong. In the Report for 1875, Mr. Wolfe writes, "In this important town, where for years nothing but disappointment and spiritual barrenness prevailed, a deep and real interest has manifested itself, and this year I have been privileged to admit fourteen souls by baptism into the Church." And in a later letter, dated April 10th, 1876, he says: "The work here has made wonderful progress. At the end of the year were compelled

to rent the largest house in the town, on account of the sudden increase of numbers. Now the big house is too small. The landlord and his family have joined us."

A touching account is given of the death, in 1873, of the wife of the excellent Native brother, Ching-Mi, to whose earnest labours, under God, the fruits gathered in at Sang-Iong are mainly due, and who, it will be remembered, was so zealous at Lo-Nguong. Both husband and wife were confirmed by Bishop Alford in 1868. Mr. Wolfe writes:—

I give here a short account of her triumphant death as I received it from her husband, who seemed most devoted to her. Her husband and herself and their two children were baptized by myself at Lo-Nguong. She selected as her baptismal name Sing-ai, *i.e.*, "Loving Heart." Very soon after this she was taken ill, and continued very sick and weak for a long time. She suffered a great deal, and her heathen father and mother and brothers tried to induce her to give up Christianity, and return to the idols. They represented her sickness as a punishment from the gods for her apostacy. But the more they tried to persuade her to give up Christ the more she seemed to cling to Him, and her faith gained fresh strength every day. At length her relations denounced her, and would not come to see her. This was a sore trial to her. She said she wished them to come in the hopes of bringing them to Jesus. She implored her father and mother to come and see her. They did so, and she most earnestly implored them to give up their opposition and come to Christ for salvation. The parents' hearts melted, and gave up all opposition to her, but they could not be induced to become Christians themselves. Her time now drew near. She called her husband and told him that she was convinced she was near the end. The husband wept bitterly. She said, "Don't cry, but bless God that I am so happy." She then exhorted her father and mother to believe in Jesus. She asked her husband to bring some of the Christians to see her. They came to her bedside and asked what she wanted. She replied, "I only wish to say that I am going, and want to ask you never, never give up the Lord Jesus Christ. He has made me very happy. I want you to press Him to your heart and never give Him up." After this she became speechless, and when the Christians came to see her, she would clasp her hands and point upwards. Next day it pleased God to give her the use of speech again. She called her husband,

and said to him, "I am very happy; I now can see my precious Saviour, and I long to be with Him. I expect to be with Him this very day." She then asked her husband to go and tell the catechist and his wife how happy she felt, and to thank them for all their kindness to her. A few minutes before her death, which took place that very afternoon, as she anticipated, she called for her two children. Their father brought them to her bedside. She said a few kind, affectionate words to her little ones, and blessed them in the name of the Lord. She tried to encourage her weeping husband with loving words, and then asked him to kneel down and pray with her. He did so, and while the words of prayer were poured forth, and no doubt winged to heaven, her blessed spirit departed to be for ever with the Lord.

"Amen, so let it be;
Life from the dead is in that word:
'Tis Immortality."

Even while there were but few converts at this station, they did not forget to pass on the good news of salvation which they had received themselves; and inquirers began to multiply in the mountain villages around long before the recent stirring of the dry-bones at Sang-Iong. Two of these are repeatedly mentioned in the Reports, SA-IONG and SUO-IONG, but particulars of the work are not given. Mr. Mahood, however, writing in March, 1873, sends an interesting account of a visit he paid to the latter place:—

Having passed over some high mountains, a distance of about sixteen miles, we come in sight of a large valley, in which is situated the above-mentioned village, containing upwards of 2,000 inhabitants. The people in that neighbourhood were formerly rebellious, and opposed the authority of the mandarins. Now, however, they seem peaceable, and God has given us an entrance amongst them.

There are upwards of twenty there who have now joined our Church. Only three out of their number have yet been baptized, but I hope that the others will soon be fitted to be received into the Church by baptism. As we approached the village the first thing that attracted our attention was a cluster of houses, which seemed to be inhabited by living beings, but after inquiry we found that they only contained the corpses of some of

the people's forefathers, coffined up for years past, waiting until a lucky spot is found in which they may be interred.

The people here have a strong belief in geomancy. They think that if the wise men, or geomancers, find out a favoured spot to bury their dead in, their future posterity will be placed in high positions, where they will have money in abundance, accompanied with great happiness. The man who is clever enough to find this lucky spot must, of course, receive a considerable sum of money for his trouble, and as the ground with such rare qualities is seldom to be found, and when found, the money to pay the geomancers is not always at hand, the people postpone the burial of their dead for twenty or thirty years; sometimes so long that the coffins decay, and the bones only are preserved in urns in these mortuaries. To pay special respect to the dead is thought of the greatest importance, and the best way to do so is to spend a large amount of money at the funerals. Sometimes a poor man will expend 150 or 200 dollars at a funeral, and to procure this he leaves himself and family in debt for years afterwards. One of our Christians told me a few days ago that he was about to bury his father, who had been coffined twenty years, but for want of money he was unable to bury him before.

This custom of keeping the dead unburied is, of course, being abolished by the extension of Christianity.

Having passed these mortuaries we entered the village, and the next place of importance that we came to was a respectable-looking shop, kept by one of our Christians. The proprietor, who is a thoroughly earnest Christian, renounced idolatry about two years ago, and since then he has had to bear with a good deal of opposition from his relatives. All their efforts to make him renounce Christianity have been fruitless, and now his family are the most regular attendants we have at our chapels. Here and there the Spirit of the Lord is raising up in these villages faithful witnesses for the truth. We remained a short time with this Christian man, while he narrated some of the things that Christ had done for him since my last visit, and then having invited him to join with us in prayer in the evening I proceeded to our chapel. In a very short time the room in which the Christians meet on Sunday was almost filled to excess with people. All were willing to hear "the heavenly doctrines," as they call our religion, and we were quite as willing to speak with them on the subject. After we had taken dinner we opened the doors of the chapel, and when they were comfortably seated I read the third of the Gospel of St. John, and addressed them on the subject of the new birth, showing that

man's nature is the same, to whatever clime he may belong, and that it is only by the Spirit of God opening the heart that we can possibly receive God's Word and become good. The people listened very attentively, and then the catechist exhorted them to embrace Christ as their only Saviour. In the evening I received into the Church by baptism a man aged sixty-two years, who had for two years past made a bold profession of Christianity. Afterwards I administered the Communion to the Christians. At eight o'clock we had a general prayer-meeting, and some of the Christians were then able to thank God publicly for the mercies which He had bestowed upon them. One of the Christians who was baptized there last year is eighty-four years of age, and another is sixty-two years. It is a pleasing sight to see these hoary-headed men, almost on the verge of the grave, casting away their idols and embracing Christianity.

SEK-PAIK-TU is a place of some importance sixteen miles north of Ku-Cheng. Its name signifies "Eighteenth Township"; and it consists of a large group of villages with an aggregate population of twenty to thirty thousand. It was occupied as early as the beginning of 1867; but the catechist, Lo Sia, one of the first Fuh-Chow converts, turned out unsatisfactory; and there has never been any permanent success among the people. One man, indeed, the very first baptized, proved a zealous helper, and afterwards became a catechist.

Some sixty miles beyond Sek-paik-tu is the *hien* city of PING-NANG, the most northerly town in the prefecture. It was visited by Mr. Cribb in November, 1866, and great interest was excited by his preaching. No one, however, could be spared to be located there until two years later, when a catechist was sent and a house rented as a chapel. As usual in the larger cities, the anger of the leading inhabitants was aroused. It was conveniently discovered that the landlord had a flaw in his title-deeds; and he was seized and sentenced to receive one hundred strokes with the bamboo. Thus even heathen have suffered in the cause of the

Saviour they knew not. The magistrates then sent for the catechist, and with great politeness assured him that they recognised the beneficent character of Christianity, but that as the gentry of Ping-Nang had just subscribed a large sum of money to establish an asylum for destitute children, they needed no impulse from without in the direction of deeds of charity. They therefore kindly advised him to go to some other place where his excellent teaching might be more obviously required. The catechist had to quit the city; but whether the asylum was ever built is as doubtful as whether the flaw in the title-deeds would have been noticed had the house been let to any one but a foreigner.

CHUI-KAU, or "Water's Mouth," is a town on the north bank of the Min, situated at the point where the stream which rushes down its tortuous course from Ku-Cheng falls into the great river, as mentioned already in our chapter on Ku-Cheng. Though not large or populous, it is a place of some consequence as a centre of traffic, for sailing-boats cannot ascend the Min beyond it, in consequence of the rocks and rapids that abound; and the tea that comes down from the Bohea district is therefore generally transhipped here. Some of the boats, however, leave their masts and sails at Chui-Kau, and are towed up the river beyond, by which process it takes them twenty days to reach Po-siang, on the border of the province. They then float down again with their cargoes, the stream rushing on with them at a rate, it is said, at certain seasons, of ten miles an hour, and the boatmen displaying great skill in steering so as to avoid the rocks.

Chui-Kau was one of the first places in the interior of Fuh-Kien to be visited by a missionary, as Mr. Wolfe stopped there when going up the Min on his first long exploring journey in 1863. Such a converging point of different lines of

traffic and travel was naturally at once marked out as a suitable place for a station. Truth preached by the living agent, or disseminated in books and tracts, at Chui-Kau, might spread to the most distant parts of the province, if not of the empire. Accordingly the usual course was followed, an attempt being made to hire a room and locate a catechist there, in 1867. But various difficulties arose, and it was not till the following year that this design could be carried out. The catechist appointed was a man who could speak the Mandarin or Court dialect as well as the local *patois* of Fuh-Chow, and it was hoped, therefore, that he might be able to influence travellers of all classes and from all parts.

There have never, however, been more than a few inquirers at Chui-Kau. It is one of the few stations in the whole Mission which have been quite fruitless, as far as at present appears. But the good seed has been faithfully sown, literally beside the waters of the Min, and figuratively "beside all waters" among the traders, boatmen, and others constantly going to and fro, and we cannot doubt that *some* has fallen into hearts prepared by the Spirit of God, and that the fruits will assuredly appear in due season.

We must leave it for a while,
  The seed which we have sown;
The spring-tide will not smile
  Until wintry months have flown.
The land is not asleep
  'Neath the mantle of her snows;
And roots are striking deep
  While the storm of winter blows.
When April comes to earth,
  Clouds and sunshine in her sky,
The seedling will spring forth;
  We shall see it by-and-by.

Author of "Copsley Annals."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE REMOTER GREAT CITIES: IONG-PING-FU—KIONG-NING-FU—HOK-NING-FU.

And Elijah said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.—1 *Kings* xviii. 43.

So the ark of the Lord compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp. . . . And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.—*Josh.* vi. 11, 14, 15, 16.

"Forward let the people go,"
Israel's God will have it so;
Though the path be through the sea,
Israel, what is that to thee?

Deep and wide the sea appears,
Israel wonders, Israel fears;
Yet the word is "Forward" still—
Israel, 'tis thy Master's will.

Yea, thy God shall yet be known
Far and wide as God alone,
Every obstacle shall fall,
For thy Lord is "Lord of all."

WE have seen that while the Gospel has won its way from village to village in several parts of Fuh-Kien, the larger towns have generally proved indifferent or hostile. Still a foot-hold in them has been maintained, and they have been centres of missionary opera-

tions in their respective districts, although contributing but small quotas themselves to the numbers of the Church. Hitherto, however, we have only visited the cities of the *hien* or second class, such as Lieng-Kong, Lo-Nguong, Ning-Taik. Still less encouraging have been the results of efforts to evangelise the yet larger cities of the *fu*, or first rank, such as Iong-Ping-*Fu*, Kiong-Ning-*Fu*, and Hok-Ning-*Fu*, which are, like Fuh-Chow-*Fu*, capitals of *prefectures*, although not also, like it, capitals of *provinces*.

Not that the attempt to plant the standard of the cross in these important places has not been vigorously and persistently made. From the first, the missionaries sought an entrance for the message of salvation to the teeming populations within their walls. Two years before the occupation of Lieng-Kong, which was the first of the out-stations, Mr. Wolfe had penetrated to both Iong-Ping and Kiong-Ning; and Hok-Ning was also visited at an early period. Yet not only is there no native Christian community at either of these three great cities, but at the two former there is actually no mission at all, the catechists having been barbarously treated and ignominiously expelled. Yet let us not forget that this is only a repetition of what St. Paul had to undergo at Philippi and Thessalonica—the very places to which the happiest of his letters were afterwards addressed.

IONG-PING, as it is called in the dialect of Fuh-Kien, or YEN-PIN, as it is in the Mandarin or Court dialect, is situated some 150 miles west of Fuh-Chow, at the confluence of two rivers which together form the Min. It is, as we have said, the capital of a prefecture or department, in which is included seven *kaings*, or districts governed by *hien* cities. It is said to have been built 900 years ago, and to have been a place of importance ever since. It has suffered much from the

usual scourges of an Asiatic city, fire and the sword, by both of which thousands have perished again and again. Two hundred years ago the river overflowed, and destroyed the wall, which was rebuilt so strongly that it has ever since stood firm against the most sweeping floods. Mr. Wolfe gives the following account of his first visit in the course of his lengthened tour in the interior in 1863 :—

As soon as we landed, crowds gathered around us, and the excitement was intense. We went through its principal streets, all the while followed by an immense crowd. We proceeded towards the Yamun, which looked very imposing at a distance, but, like everything else in China, its grandeur vanished as soon as we came near it. There were a few soldiers standing sentry in front, holding some tattered banners in their hands. They looked quite frightened at our sudden appearance, followed as we were by a large crowd. They offered no resistance, so we marched into the great courtyard of the Yamun, with the crowd at our heels. The officers seemed very civil, but we did not remain long in their company. We proceeded to descend the great stone steps into the streets. On our way back we distributed some books, but the excitement and anxiety to get them was so great, that we could not control the crowd. They rushed on us, took our books from us by force, and nearly crushed us to death. I had great difficulty in rescuing from the grasp of one man my pocket-book, which he forcibly took from my inside coat pocket. After this we went through some more of the streets, and were very kindly invited by some wealthy merchants and shopkeepers to sit and take tea in their houses. We accepted the invitation of one or two, and were very much pleased with their civility and the arrangements of their houses.

This city is very well suited for a missionary station, from the large population in the various cities and towns in its perfecture; but it should be occupied by foreign missionaries. There is easy communication with Fuh-Chow, and with the several kaing cities in the department. They can nearly all be visited by water.

Iong-Ping-Fu is celebrated for its literary men and sages; and the Government maintains five or six schools for the education of the poorer classes. Its hagiographa rival in the number of their saints and hermits, those of the Roman Catholic Church, and their supposed miracles are

not behind in absurdity and folly those which are retailed in "Butler's Lives of the Saints." Liu-kung, for example, brought rain by his prayers; he was rewarded for his powers with immortality, and is now worshipped by his fellow-citizens. Poe-tau-no retired into a mountain, lived as a hermit, wore iron shoes for the mortification of his body. He miraculously brought two chings of rice daily out of a stone about ten pounds weight, which was placed at the mouth of his cell. He was able to increase it to four chings whenever visitors came to see him. When he was made a god he left this wonderful stone behind; but the cupidity of the people broke it in order to get all the rice at once. To their great disappointment, they did not find a grain. There could be hundreds of cases related of saints who belonged to this city who are supposed to have wrought wonders in their day, and who are worshipped at the present time by a credulous and superstitious people.

It was in March, 1868, that the first attempt was made to occupy Iong-Ping permanently, there being then a catechist named Ngu-Hiong-Ing, who, being better educated than his brethren, could speak the Court dialect, which is in common use in these large cities. Mr. Cribb's narrative of this attempt furnishes an excellent illustration of the necessary procedure in such cases, as well as of the difficulties so frequently met with:—

Early in March we sent up the catechist and chapel-keeper to take possession of the house, and commence the more necessary repairs, hoping to follow him in a few days. However, I was unable to leave here so soon as I had expected, and did not reach Iong-Ping till the beginning of April. This city is situated on the banks of the river Min, about 150 miles west of Fuh-Chow. There being a strong flood upon the river owing to the recent rain and west winds prevailing, I decided on going overland as the more expeditious route. It took five days to accomplish the journey. On arriving I found that very little had been done in the way of repairing the premises, the people having threatened to prevent workmen from executing our orders. After waiting quietly over Sunday, and seeing that our more immediate neighbours were friendly disposed towards us, I obtained workmen from the other end of the city, and commenced repairing the drains and building a stove for cooking our rice.

It was soon noised abroad that the foreigner was repairing the chapel, and multitudes flocked to the spot and ordered the workmen to desist.

An altercation ensued, which ended in the workmen sending up to me to say they could not work any longer as the people were "not willing." I immediately went down, and requesting the people not to interfere, bid the men proceed. However, they no sooner commenced than an effort was made to take their tools from them, so that, fearing they might lose their little property, they snatched up their tools and all that belonged to them and ran off. Being left to myself, I began to remonstrate with the people at their conduct, but amidst so large an assembly, speaking a dialect which I did not understand, it was difficult to do anything. A few Fuh-Chow men were present, and, hearing me speaking their dialect, took my part, and interpreted my words to the Iong-Ping population. I reasoned with them for about two hours, but nothing would satisfy them; "they did not care for emperor, mandarins, or any one else, they would have no foreign religion in their city." Some then began to pull down the stove the masons had been building, and one or two threw bricks towards me. I then told them, as they would not listen to reason but were getting violent, I would refer the matter to the prefect of the city. Feeling sure that the prefect would give an order in their favour, they consented to disperse for a time to give me an opportunity of visiting him.

After making the needful preparations, I repaired to the Yamun. I sent in my Chinese card and passport, but was kept waiting a considerable time in an anteroom while the reception-hall was being prepared, and while the mandarin put on his official garments. At length it was announced that the "great man" would receive me, and I was ushered into his presence. After a few questions relative to my age, country, family, &c., I narrated the occasion of my visit. I explained that we had rented a house in the main street of the city, had paid the security-money, and had drawn out the deed of lease in due order, but now that the catechist had come to take possession, the people interfered and threatened to pull down the place. I related the disturbances of the morning; told him that the people feared that foreigners were coming to live there, which was not the case, and requested him to issue a proclamation to say that foreigners were not coming to reside there; that the house was properly rented to a native; and that the emperor having permitted his subjects to embrace and to propagate the religion of Jesus, saying that "it inculcated virtue," no opposition must be raised against those who were of that faith, nor must they be prevented from peaceably pursuing their calling. However, though willing to quell the opposition, he did not like to put his pen to paper on such a matter, for fear he might give more countenance

to our religion than might be approved in higher quarters. He at length decided to send messengers to exhort the people verbally to keep the peace. At the same time he thought it would tend to allay the fears of the people if I would stay at an hotel instead of at the chapel, to which of course I consented. He then promised to send his servants to look for good apartments for me, and to escort me to them. I thanked him for his kind offer, and took my departure, escorted by four of his subordinates, to the chapel. These underlings, with an air of great dignity, threw wide open the doors of the building, and, pretending to be in a great rage, asked the crowd that had assembled, "What they had come to see?" and "What is the meaning of this disturbance?" adding, "Cannot peaceable men repair a broken-down house without being threatened to be killed for so doing? The mandarin will surely punish all who offend against the peace." Before they had concluded this short announcement, the whole crowd had quietly dispersed. We then went to the hotel, where it was notified that I was the guest of the prefect, and that no one was to intrude. In the evening the prefect sent his card to me at the hotel, returning my passport duly stamped. Next day all was quiet, and the workmen resumed their employment without the slightest opposition.

The catechist has since then been residing there, striving to work his way amongst the people; but he has not yet thought it advisable to open the chapel for preaching. He invites people to come in to converse with him on religious subjects, and has been endeavouring to remove the prejudice of the people by placarding in public places a summary of Christian doctrine, and hymns. We hope and pray that in due time we may be able to preach the Gospel in this spiritual Ephesus without let or hindrance.

Thus the preliminary difficulty was surmounted; but the very success of the "foreigner" so far only tended to excite the opposition of the literary classes. They resorted to every kind of artifice short of open assault to stop the work; and at length they succeeded, though only by an accidental circumstance. One of the great fires which have on so many occasions ravaged Iong-Ping broke out, destroyed over a hundred houses, and among others that rented by the missionaries, the catechist only just escaping with his life; and

then, when search was made for new quarters, no one could be found bold enough to let to the foreigner.

Other attempts were made from time to time, but three years elapsed before another chapel was secured. The same catechist then again went to work, but was only permitted to labour for a short time, the house being attacked and pulled down under the auspices of the *literati*. In the meanwhile, however, God's promise that His Word shall not return unto Him void had been fulfilled in *one* conversion. A man heard the Gospel preached, and went away, like others, giving no sign of being impressed. But having to go down to Fuh-Chow in the way of trade, he called on Mr. Mahood. His ideas of Christianity, gathered from a single address, were naturally very vague, but Mr. Mahood "showed to him the way of God more perfectly," and gave him a Chinese Bible. The reading of God's Word written finished the work begun by God's Word spoken. He renounced idolatry, avowed himself a Christian, and persuaded another family in a village sixteen miles from Iong-Ping to embrace the new faith likewise.

Up to this time the chapel has not been rebuilt, nor can any satisfaction be obtained from the Chinese authorities. And not only so, but the mandarins have expelled the catechist and the few inquirers who had gathered round him, and have posted placards on the walls and gates, prohibiting any one professing the foreign religion from entering the city on pain of death. This persecution is different from that in 1868. Then the people attacked the premises, and were quieted by the authorities. Now it is the magistrates who use their power against Christianity, although many of the people rather sympathise with its cause than otherwise.

KIONG-NING, or KIEN-NONG, 260 miles north-west of Fuh-

Chow, is a still larger and more important city than Iong-Ping. It is, in fact, the second city of the whole province north of the Min. It is the great inland emporium of trade. From Kiong-Ning comes the great bulk of the produce—tea, timber, resin—that is brought down by river to Fuh-Chow, and is either there absorbed or thence exported. Paper, also, is manufactured on a large scale in the Kiong-Ning district, and distributed over the empire. The city is romantically situated in a fertile valley among the mountains, at the confluence of several streams, which unite to form one of the principal feeders of the Min ; and the population is thriving and busy in an unusual degree.

Mr. Wolfe visited Kiong-Ning on the same long journey in 1863 to which we have before referred. He was well received and attentively listened to, and distributed many Scriptures and tracts ; but his full account of the visit never reached this country.

In 1867 Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Cribb wrote a most earnest appeal to the Church at home to send men out specially to take up their residence at Kiong-Ning ; but the staff has never been sufficiently reinforced to admit of this, and although the eyes of our brethren have often turned wistfully to the great pagan city that seemed to call so loudly for Christian effort, it was not until 1875 that a mission could be planted there, and there was no Englishman to send. An experienced catechist (since ordained, *see* p. 68), and four assistants were set apart for this purpose. For eleven months they laboured, and had already gathered a little congregation of inquirers, when the storm of persecution burst upon them. We give the narrative of their sufferings in Mr. Wolfe's words :—

At Kiong-Ning we have been getting on well for nearly eleven months, and a small congregation has been gathered in that desperate place, but last week a terrible persecution broke like a thunder-clap upon our

dear people there, and nearly deprived us of one of our most useful workers, one of the candidates for holy orders. Our chapel was pulled down to the ground. The catechist and four of the Christians were stripped naked, hung up to a tree, and then in this position severally flogged, the enemy calling out to them, "Call now upon your Jesus and see if He will come to save you." They then attempted to suffocate the poor Christians as they were hanging with the fumes of a sort of incense; and lastly they brought a sort of vile mixture of vinegar and the refuse of human hair, &c., from the barber's shop, and with a knife opened the teeth of the Christians and stuffed the vile mixture down the throat. They took them down from the tree nearly dead, and by a rope tied round their necks led them through the principal streets naked, as a spectacle of shame for the populace, and then thrust them out of the city gates. The officers now took pity upon them, gave them clothes, and sent them in a boat to Fuh-Chow, 300 miles down.

When and how Kiong-Ning will again be invaded in the name of the Lord we cannot now say. That it will be so invaded, and that spoils shall be gathered there for the triumph of the Great King, we cannot doubt for a moment.

HOK-NING, or in Court dialect FUH-NING, "the city of blessedness and peace," is on the coast, north of Ning-Taik, which place, indeed, is in the Hok-Ning prefecture. This city was visited by Mr. Wolfe in 1866, and he wrote very hopefully of its promise as a mission station. Like other places, however, it has had to wait for the development of Native agency. Its occupation, with that of Kiong-Ning, was one of the events of 1875. We have no particulars, but it is matter of thankfulness that there has been no outbreak as at the other city, and Mr. Wolfe writes that the work there is going on "famously." One of the four Native ministers ordained on Easter Day, 1876, has been appointed to this important station.

In the Hok-Ning prefecture there is a *hien* city called *Hok-Ang*, which is the head-quarters of Romanism in Fuh-Kien. There is a church and large schools, with one foreign resident

priest, and some 2,000 adherents. The priests claim 30,000 in the whole province, most of whom are hereditary Christians of the fifth generation. When Mr. Wolfe visited Hok-Ang, in 1866, several of the Chinese Romanists came to see him. Recognising their profession of attachment to the same Master, he at first tried to regard them and treat them as brethren; but, alas! he found there was but little common ground between him and them. They knew nothing whatever of Scripture, and in many respects there was scarcely any distinction observable between them and the heathen. One of the deities of China is Seng-Mu, "the holy mother." This title has been adopted for the Mother of our Lord, and there is little difficulty in transferring to her the worship given to the Buddhist goddess. These Roman Catholic Chinese at Hok-Ang expressed great surprise that Mr. Wolfe did not pay due adoration to "Seng-Mu," the priests having informed them that all the European nations worshipped her. At some other places in Fuh-Kien the influence of "the religion of the Lord of Heaven," as Romanism is called in China, has confronted our missionaries. Complaints have been made of the higher standard of Christian living required by them; and inquirers have expressed their readiness to join the Church if, "like the people belonging to the religion of the Lord of Heaven," they might continue their opium-smoking, and work as usual on the Lord's Day. It is grievous that Christianity should be thus travestied in the very face of Paganism. We cease to wonder at the comparative "success" of the Jesuit Missions when we see the convenient concessions made to the habits both of vice and of superstition so prevalent in China; and we learn to estimate aright the much boasted "results" which are so often thrown in the teeth of the missionaries of a purer and, to flesh and blood, less pleasant Christianity.

These great cities, no doubt, will not yield at once to the assaults of the army of Christ ; but let the same faith in God's sure promise, and patience in abiding His time, be manifested that Israel showed as they marched round and round Jericho and the cry will soon be, "Shout, for the Lord hath given us the city."

An arm of flesh must fail
  In such a strife as this ;
He only can prevail
  Whose arm immortal is :
'Tis Heaven itself the strength must yield,
And weapons fit for such a field.

And Heaven supplies them too :
  The Lord, who never faints,
Is greater than the foe,
  And He is with His saints !
Thus arm'd, they venture to the fight,
Thus arm'd, they put their foes to flight.

Kelly.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RIVER STATIONS.

We went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.—*Acts* xvi. 13.

Ye did run well; who did hinder you?—*Gal.* v. 7.

O remember not against us former iniquities; let Thy tender mercies speedily prevent us; for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for Thy name's sake. Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?—*Ps.* lxxix. 8-10.

One storm the new-mown hay may spoil,
  One frost may kill a thousand flowers,
And one slight touch may blot and soil
  The beauteous work of many hours.
Yet destruction and death shall but rule for a day,—
Love and life take the kingdom for ever and aye!

S. G. Stock.

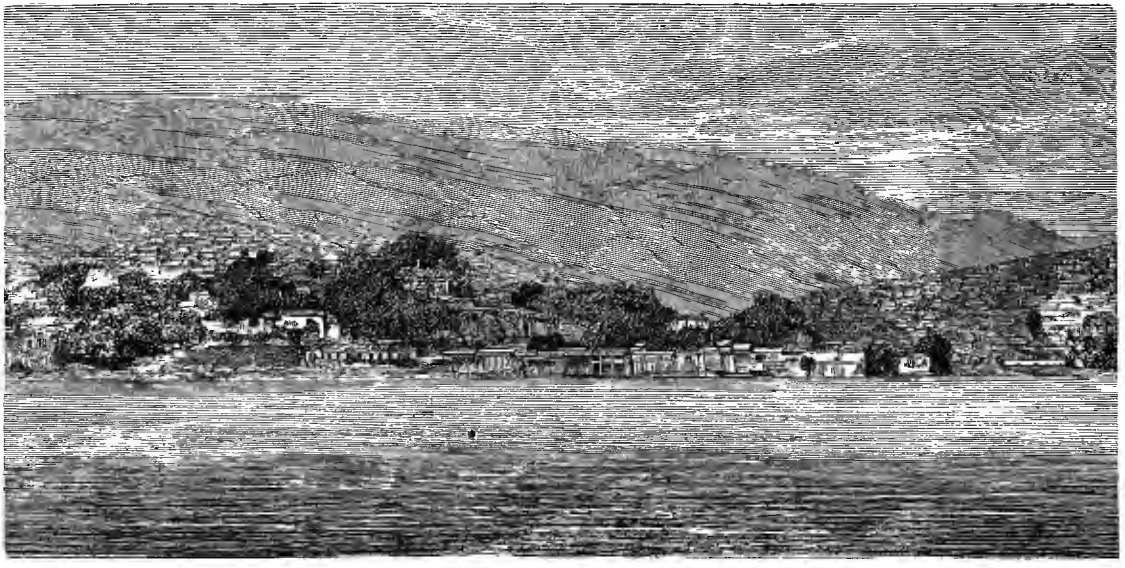
ONE of the most promising of the early stations, but which has proved most disappointing, was MING-ANG-TENG, a place on the left bank of the Min, about twenty miles below Fuh-Chow. It is fortified —according to Chinese ideas—to guard the passage up the river. "There are forts and batteries, and abundance of cannon on the batteries, gaping out upon the water." Some of these guns, on examination, Mr. Wolfe found to be of foreign manufacture. One was "a magnificent Spanish bronze cannon," but on it was carved an inscription to the effect that the material originally came from China, and was stolen thence by the barbarians! "Of course," remarks Mr. Wolfe, "no

other brass but the Emperor's could produce such a beautiful one, and now it has reverted to its rightful owner, whom it will help to protect for ten thousand ages."

Ming-ang-teng was opened as a station in the early part of 1867; Ling Cheng-seng, the man whose conversion under such interesting circumstances is related at page 35, being located there. He was very successful at first in drawing inquirers round him, and devoted much time to their instruction. At one of their evening meetings a curious incident occurred:—

As the Christians were all sitting round the table listening to the catechist expounding the third chapter of Genesis, and explaining the temptation, the fall, and the first promise, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," &c., suddenly the little company were startled by the sight of a large serpent, coiled round the beam quite close to the table, hissing with all his might at the catechist. All flew to the door, but the catechist brought them all back, saying, "Come, let us bruise his head, and then continue our meeting." So they set to, and succeeded in killing the serpent, and then buried him in the garden, and afterwards enjoyed their meeting, praising God for His kind protection from the serpent's bite, but, above all, that He had saved them from the power of the old serpent, the devil, in calling them to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, and giving them faith in the power of His death to redeem their souls from sin and death.

The seed sprang up quickly at Ming-ang-teng, chiefly among the women, which is an unusual circumstance in China; and some interesting narratives of conversions have been given. One, who was baptized by the name of Phœbe, and who became, for a time, like her namesake in the Church of Corinth, "a succourer of many," was remarkable in more ways than one. She was a well-educated woman, about forty years of age, and could read the classical character, an unusual accomplishment in her sex. One of her sons behaved with great violence when she embraced Christianity, and threatened to kill the catechist; but her prayers and efforts



MING-ANG-TENG.

on his behalf were rewarded by his baptism on Easter Day, 1868. She was most assiduous in making known the Gospel everywhere, so much so that some of the Christians took offence at a woman being so active, until they were referred to the Acts of the Apostles for precedents. When Bishop Alford visited the Mission in 1868, Phœbe and thirteen other persons from Ming-ang-teng were confirmed by him in the city church at Fuh-Chow.

On two or three occasions some of the islands in the estuary of the Min were visited from Ming-ang-teng, and also from a sanatorium which had been secured for the Mission on one of them, at a place called Sharp Peak; and the account of one of the visits will give some idea of the openings for Christian effort thus obtained:—

It rained and stormed all night, and the river looked rough and angry, and some of the boatmen said we could not cross down to Pu-kiang, or Pu-keung, that morning. At length we found a boat willing to take us. I thought it prudent to leave the women behind, as it looked very rough. They were much disappointed, for Phœbe wished much to see our chapel at Pu-kiang, and speak to the women there about Jesus. Our little company was thus divided: the women and four of the men remained at Teong-ang, and the next day returned to Ming-ang-teng. The catechist, Timothy (Ling Cheng-Seng), myself, and two others, proceeded to the island of Pu-kiang, about ten miles, at the mouth of the river. It proved very rough; our little boat was tossed about most unmercifully, and two of our party got very sea-sick. Timothy stuck himself at the helm of the boat, and never left it till we arrived safe on shore.

We arrived at Pu-kiang about 2 P.M. and found a large number of children reading in the Mission school. This was encouraging after the severe shaking we got coming across. Crowds of the simple islanders came to listen to us, and we remained the greater part of the day preaching and talking to them about Jesus. The evening proved bitterly cold, but we had no fire. I went out in the evening to see the roaring sea, and was fully gratified in my desire. As I was returning, covered up in my Chinese wind-cap, I met the captain of a ship which was weather-bound outside the island, taking a stroll on the beach. He looked quite sur-

prised to see me in this out-of-the-way place, and wished to know what brought me on the island. He seemed still almost to doubt whether I was a reality or a phantom; and when I told him I had a little church on the island, he cried out, "A church on this island!" He then said, "I presume you are a missionary. To what denomination do you belong?" he inquired. I told him I belonged to the Church Missionary Society, and then we had a most pleasant and friendly conversation. I found he was a Christian man. He invited me on board his ship, but I am sorry I was unable to go. He took his departure and left me alone. I returned to the little church, and again preached to all who came to listen.

There are three or four inquirers at this place, but they smoke opium, and generally there is very little hopes of converting such men; they are less open than others to good influences. Opium takes away the heart and the desire for everything holy. There is no use in people trying to palliate the habit of opium-smoking; it is an unmitigated evil, and is bringing thousands and thousands of this people to temporal and eternal ruin. The fact is too palpable to be denied. It stares you in the face wherever you go.

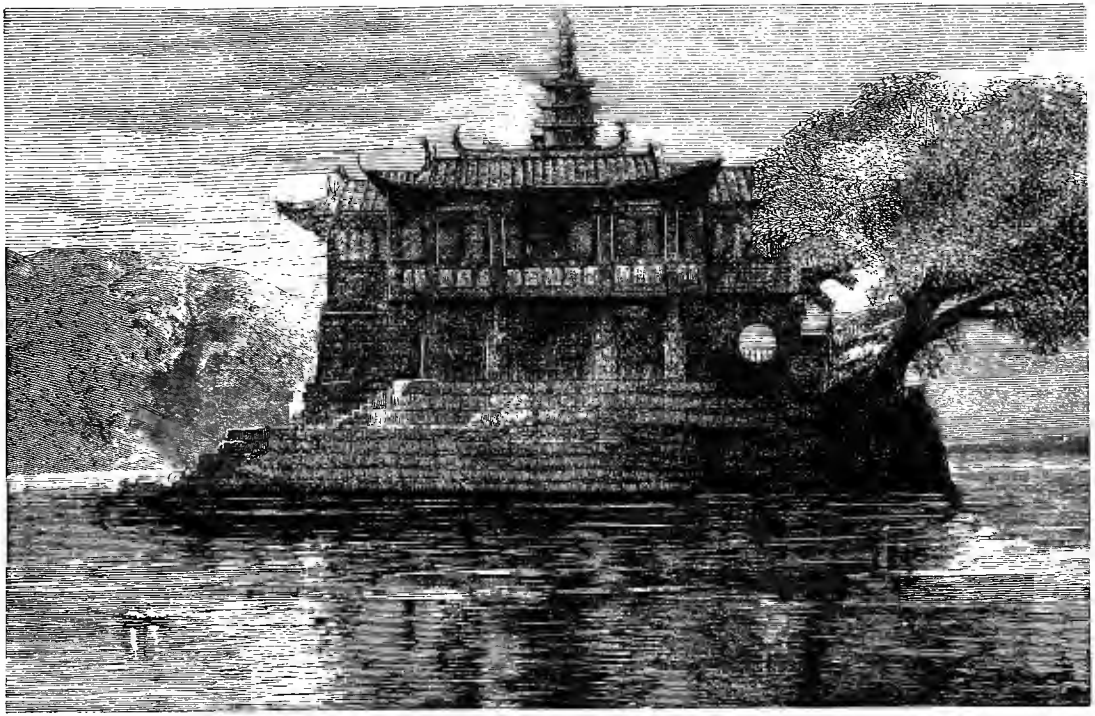
The people of this island are entirely devoted to fishing, and, during three or four months of the year, the majority of the male population is on the sea. There is very little cultivation of land carried on here. The sand blown in from the shore has covered a great part of the soil, and has rendered it unfit for cultivation. There are about 800 families on the island, which would make, probably, about 3,000 inhabitants. Within sight of this island there are five or six others, each quite as large as Pu-kiang, and containing, in all probability, a greater population.

Across the river on the west side, is the large island of Lau-kie, on which there are 12,000 families, and if we reckon five to a family, we will have a population of 60,000 on the island. We have a mission station on this island, which promises to be very interesting.

The work on these islands, though commenced, was, after a while, dropped, partly on account of the insufficiency of the agents, and partly on account of what was called "the Sharp Peak difficulty." In order to prevent the missionaries obtaining the property they wanted for a sanatorium, the mandarins set up a fictitious claim to it, and after much disputing, the British Consul interfered to protect what

were the rights of the missionaries, not as missionaries but as Englishmen under the treaties, and insisted on the proposed house being allowed to be erected. To guard the native workmen from threatened violence, he directed a gun-boat belonging to the British squadron in the Chinese seas to lie alongside the place. The workmen were attacked and driven off the ground; and an English officer and a few men proceeded to arrest the ringleader of the assailants. They were received with volleys of stones. To intimidate the crowd, they fired their pistols into the air; but on one man rushing upon the officer with a spear, he was fired at and wounded, and died a few days after. Notwithstanding the forbearance of the British in this unfortunate affair, the death of the man naturally enraged the people, and we fear that the missionary cause was injured by the event. It is quite true, as the Bishop of Peterborough (Dr. Magee) said in a debate in the House of Lords on missions in China about the same time, that an Englishman, by becoming a missionary, does not, and must not, lose the international rights he would possess as a trader or a plain citizen; but at the same time it is a thing to be lamented when the necessity arises to put those rights in force. St. Paul could, on occasion, claim the privileges of his Roman citizenship, but those after all were not exactly the privileges of a foreigner, and his insisting on them rather appealed to national pride than offended national prejudice.

While, however, admitting that the issue of the "Sharp Peak difficulty" was not an encouragement to lean upon an arm of flesh, it must not be forgotten that it was an entirely exceptional case. Very little indeed have the Fuh-Chow missionaries leant upon the arm of flesh, and very little assistance has the Mission derived from it. The appeals to the British Consul have almost always been in behalf of persecuted



TEMPLE IN THE MIN RIVER.

converts, and notwithstanding the personal kindness shown by the gentlemen who have held that position, but little has come of such appeals. The Chinese will not obey even treaty stipulations unless force is likely to be used, and they know well enough that force will not be used in the cause of the spread of Christianity.

But if the work on the islands was hindered by political difficulties, the work at Ming-ang-teng was hindered by sadder causes. It was too hopeful for the great enemy not to make a desperate effort to spoil it, and alas! he succeeded only too well. Inconsistency and sin, of a kind similar to that which made St. Paul sorrow over his Corinthian converts, were the pits into which they were tempted, and some went back altogether. Even Ling Cheng-Seng, sad to say, after some years of (we cannot but believe) true service in the Master's cause, fell into sin, and in 1874 Mr. Wolfe had the inexpressible pain of removing him from the office of catechist. By the last accounts he is still regular in his attendance on the means of grace, though not now in the employment of the Mission ; and it is hard to believe that such a man will not be restored, as David and as Peter were restored, by Him who has said, "I will heal their backslidings ; I will love them freely, for Mine anger is turned away from them."

But Ming-ang-teng has never fulfilled its early promise. There is, however, a remnant there—a tender plant, which we trust will yet take root downward and bear fruit upward. Let us regard it as a token for good that one of the four faithful Native evangelists lately ordained (*see* page 68)—that one, indeed, who won the largest share of Bishop Burdon's approbation, though the youngest of the four—is a Ming-ang-teng convert. Meanwhile these reverses and disappointments show us the dark side of missionary life—a side it is good for us to see, and right for us to ponder over, and which should

surely lead to more earnest prayer, on behalf both of the missionaries who have such burdens to bear, and of the converts who are surrounded by so many and great dangers.

Return!
O chosen of My love!
Fear not to meet thy beckoning Saviour's view;
Long ere I called thee by thy name, I knew
That very treacherously thou wouldst deal;
Now I have seen thy ways, yet I will heal.
Return! wilt thou yet linger far from Me?
My wrath is turned away, I have redeemèd thee.

F. R. Havergal.

Thou know'st the way to bring me back,
My fallen spirit to restore:
Oh, for Thy truth and mercy's sake,
Forgive and bid me sin no more;
The ruins of my soul repair,
And make my heart a house of prayer.

C. Wesley.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCLUSION.

Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.—*John* xii. 24.

Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.—*Ps.* xc. 16, 17.

Brighter still and brighter
Glows the western sun,
Shedding all its gladness
O'er our work that 's done.
G. Thring.

Lord, crown our faith's endeavour
With beauty and with grace,
Till, clothed in light for ever,
We see Thee face to face.
E. H. Bickersteth.

LET us gather up a few thoughts suggested by the foregoing details respecting the past and future of the Fuh-Kien Mission.

I. The first thought is that embodied in the pregnant text that stands at the head of this chapter. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Such, in Christ's own words, is the law of His kingdom. To that law He Himself submitted, dying that multitudes might live. Again and again,

in the history of His Church, do we find it illustrated; and not least in the history of modern Missions. Sierra Leone is the most conspicuous instance, but Fuh-Chow, on a smaller scale, is perhaps equally striking. What, in brief, have we seen in the preceding chapters? In twenty-five years seven missionaries—eleven years passing without a single convert—two missionaries dying in the interval, and a third just as the first-fruits were being gathered, besides a fourth recently—bitter and repeated persecution of the converts—and now more than fourteen hundred Native Christians scattered over twenty-four Mission districts. Such, summed up in a single sentence, is the story of the Fuh-Kien Mission. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

II. How has the work been done? Certainly not by a large staff of English missionaries. During more than half the whole twenty-five years that have elapsed since the Mission was started, viz., during periods amounting together to fifteen years, only *one* missionary has been in the field. During other periods amounting to ten years, there were two. Only for about one year, in 1869—70, were three on the spot together.

The spread of the Gospel in Fuh-Kien has been the result of Native agency. Several of the earliest converts baptized in the city of Fuh-Chow gave up their occupations, and entered the service of the Mission. These were stationed at various promising centres; and as the work grew, others were selected from among those who embraced the Gospel, and sent forward to open fresh stations. Some of them have proved unsatisfactory. In more than one case a trusted agent, whose evangelistic labours have been manifestly blessed of God, has fallen away; and anything sadder than this it is hard to conceive. But it is nothing new. The enemy that ensnared them is the same that destroyed a Judas, enticed away a Demas, hindered

the usefulness of a Mark, even overcame a Peter. We hope and believe that our Chinese brethren who have been led into sin will yet be brought back; and our part is to blame not so much them as ourselves, for had we sent out a sufficient number of missionaries, they need not have been left, as they were necessarily left, for months together, without the guidance and instruction of older brethren in the faith, in the midst of demoralising scenes and influences out of which they had but recently themselves been delivered. But the career of the majority has been very different. They have faithfully carried the Gospel from place to place; they have patiently taught the poor and the ignorant, visiting them from house to house during the week, and gathering them on Sunday into the little chapels to join in common prayer and praise.

But the good work has not been done by paid agents merely. Perhaps the results are still more due to the voluntary efforts of the converts. Sons have brought their fathers to Christ; husbands have brought their wives; the good news of a Saviour's love is passed on from mouth to mouth, and from village to village. The readers of the foregoing chapters will not have forgotten the old patriarchs of Lo-Nguong, the carpenter and tailor of Ang-Iong, the widow of Puang-lang, the landlord of Ning-Taik. And at the present time while fifty-two agents are regularly employed, there are no less than eighty voluntary helpers.

Nevertheless, the very success of our Native brethren has rendered the need of additional European labourers more urgent. Bishop Burdon most justly writes: "The foreign missionary is needed, not only to give the first impetus which calls Christian churches into existence, but to guide, superintend, and watch over the new Christians. They are ignorant. They need 'teaching to observe *all* things whatsoever

the Master has commanded us.' The best among them require careful training that they may become teachers of their countrymen. The teacher, the evangelist, the itinerator, the theological professor, are all needed first from Christian lands, *and more than one of each.*"

III. In the early days of Christianity, it was in the great cities that the Gospel made the most rapid progress. We find St. Paul's time almost entirely spent at places like Corinth and Ephesus, and read scarcely anything of the work in the rural districts. And so long was it before the peasantry of the Roman Empire received the new faith, that the word *pagani, i.e.*, peasants, villagers, country folk, came to mean idolaters, and hence our word Pagans. In China, just the reverse is the case. While the good news of salvation is joyfully received in village after village, the dwellers in the great towns, though they have had more opportunities of hearing it, have mostly displayed either careless indifference, as at Fuh-Chow itself and at Lieng-Kong, or bitter enmity, as at Iong-Ping. Even in the case of country congregations, whose head-quarters happen to be in a city, the converts mostly come from outside the walls, and not from inside, as we have observed at Lo-Nguong and Ning-Taik. Will the word *urban* hereafter become in China synonymous with heathen, as the word *pagan* did in Europe? Bishop Burdon remarks: "There seems to be something in the very atmosphere of a Chinese city opposed to the claims of religion. At home, if our great cities are the centre of very much evil, they, at all events, are also the centre of some good. In China, I am almost afraid it must be said, there is no counteracting influence to the evil." Let our prayers go up in behalf of the cities of China to Him who has revealed to us His own glorious abode under the similitude of a city—"a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." As Bunyan pictures to us, it is

to the Celestial City that the Christian pilgrim is travelling. As Bonar sings—

> "The home to which I 'm hasting
> Is not in some silent glen;
> The place where my hopes are resting
> Is a city of living men."

IV. And as it is the cities which show the greatest indifference to the Gospel, so it is from the *literati* and gentry whose influence preponderates in them that the chief opposition to the work has come. It cannot be pleaded that the preservation of public order is their motive. No charge can justly be brought against the missionaries of an injudicious excess of zeal in exciting the hostile passions of the mob. The usual mode of procedure, in occupying a new station, is to send first a Native teacher, who, living quietly among his countrymen, removes prejudice, explains the objects of the Mission, and the motives that have led to its establishment, and thus smoothes the way for the visits of the European missionary. And in point of fact the opposition does not come from "the mob." The people generally would welcome the Mission, but for the hostility of the *literati.* The conduct of the latter recalls that of the Jewish leaders at Thessalonica, who, we are told, "moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar."

How far the official representatives of European nations should be expected to interfere to prevent persecution is a difficult question. We need not revert to the circumstances alluded to in the preceding chapter. In reporting the late outbreaks in the Ning-Taik district, Mr. Wolfe very justly observes that "the Native Christians must, in a country like China, be prepared to expect and endure persecution on

account of their religion; and," he adds, "they have endured it more or less all along."

Bishop Burdon, in his recent Report, entirely acquits the missionaries of "hankering after the inevitable gun-boat." He remarks that in asking for consular interference, they "only take it for granted that the Consuls themselves are Christian men, who, before a heathen magistrate, will not be ashamed to show that they take an interest in Christians, even though they are natives of China, and to try every moral means in their power to instil the principles of toleration and fair dealing into the minds of the rulers of the land." And when the local authorities, in avowed defiance of the treaty between Great Britain and China, which secures toleration to the converts, themselves openly encourage violence and oppression, it is high time that a Christian nation should interpose. Nevertheless, our trust must be, not in an arm of flesh, but in Him who, while He said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," said also that His people were "of more value than many sparrows," "not one of whom should fall to the ground without the Father."

V. One consequence of the Church having been principally gathered out of the rural districts is, that the majority of the converts are very ignorant; and Bishop Burdon points to this as a great source of weakness in the present, and of anxiety for the future. Not, he is careful to explain, that they display ignorance of the Bible and its leading truths. On the contrary, considering how all their knowledge has been gained, viz., *by hearing only*, there would seem to be very many manifest signs of their having been in a peculiar sense "taught of God." But the fact that very few know how to read their own language is one deserving our earnest attention. Mr. Wolfe lately wrote on the subject of establishing Mission-schools all over the province. This branch of Mission work has not been

largely cultivated in China, perhaps from a mistaken estimate of the extent of education among the people. With so scanty a supply of missionaries, and with even the staff of Native catechists quite inadequate to the growing work, the importance of the converts being able to read the Word of God for themselves is manifest, that they may be kept in spiritual health, and preserved from error in both opinion and conduct. We earnestly hope that means will be devised for meeting this urgent want.

Meanwhile it is nevertheless a matter for great thankfulness that the Bible in the Chinese tongue is at all events accessible to the people through their ears. And the inability of so many to study it for themselves only serves to enhance the value of the work done by the catechists, upon whose oral instructions so much has depended. They, too, most of them, could not read before their conversion; and Christianity, to use Bishop Burdon's words, "has been the means, not only, as we trust, of saving their souls, but of elevating their minds and stimulating them to the acquisition of knowledge, so far as it is within their reach."

VI. If the Bible has been a precious boon to the infant Church, so also has the Prayer-book, which, likewise, is translated into the vernacular of the province. "Its constant use in all our stations," wrote Mr. Wolfe in 1870, "I have found of the greatest advantage to these poor ignorant people. It helps them to pray; it gives them ideas, and appropriate words to express them; it is a powerful instrument for teaching the Chinese correct notions of God and of the great work of redemption; and it is destined, I am convinced, to exercise a great influence for good in the enlightenment of the people." And Mr. Mahood wrote in 1873: "The Prayer-book is of immense value in these little congregations. It preserves them from uttering what is unscriptural in their petitions to God."

Not that it is slavishly adhered to. On the contrary, one of its uses has been to train the people to pray themselves. And it is an interesting fact that every Saturday evening, at every one of the forty or fifty regular stations, a prayer-meeting is held at the same hour specially on behalf of Missions and missionaries. Is there as much prayer among ourselves for the Christians of Fuh-Kien as there is among them for us and our work?

VII. It is a well-known principle of the Church Missionary Society that the development of Native Churches should be fostered in three directions, viz., self-extension, self-government, and self-support. The first, as we have seen, has been a specially characteristic feature of the Fuh-Kien Church. A kind of beginning has been made with the second, as we have stated in a previous chapter (page 62), and both Bishop Burdon and Mr. Wolfe are fully alive to the importance of training the people to manage their own Church affairs, and gradually to lean less and less upon the foreign missionary. Nor has the third point been forgotten. At a general meeting of catechists and representatives of the congregations held at Lo-Nguong in 1873, it was unanimously resolved that every adult professing Christian, whether yet baptized or not, be required every Sunday to give a subscription, not less than one cent, and as much more as possible; and that two trustworthy members should be selected by each congregation to collect the money and be responsible for its proper management. Of individual liberality several examples have been before us in the preceding chapters; and Bishop Burdon, when on his visitation in April, 1876, was particularly struck by the number of village chapels which had been built by the people themselves.

VIII. Lastly, *the work is a real work.* Very happily does Mr. A. B. Hutchinson, in the journal from which we have so

largely quoted, take up and adopt as his own the famous words of Bishop Cotton respecting Tinnevelly: "I am deeply impressed with the reality and thorough-going character of the whole business." "Both in nature and in grace," adds Mr. Hutchinson, "of the wonders to be seen, not the half had been told me." Bishop Burdon gives similar testimony:—"The number of Christians," he writes, "for the time during which work has been going on, and considering the small number of labourers sent out from England, is something wonderful . . . . In some places—notably in that village where Mahood was maltreated (Ang-Iong)—Mr. Wolfe assured me, and the numbers of Christians on the books testified to me, that the whole neighbourhood seemed ready to adopt Christianity if only we had more men to work the region." He then asks, "But is the work real?" and proceeds to point out three weak points in the Native Christians: one, the ignorance we have already referred to; the other two, that they have not yet learned that "cleanliness is next to godliness," nor formed those habits of reverence in the house of God to which we are accustomed. But surely we may be surprised as well as thankful when he adds: "I honestly think that nothing worse could be found out or said against the converts"; and thankful without surprise when he goes on, "It is my firm belief that the work as a whole is a genuine one . . . . I look forward most hopefully to its future."

Truly the fields are white unto the harvest. But how few are the labourers! "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will thrust forth labourers into His harvest."

The word "conclusion" is only in a very limited sense a suitable title for this chapter. The writer may lay down his pen, the reader may close the volume; but the story which the one has so imperfectly narrated, but which, it is hoped

will nevertheless so deeply interest the other, is a story yet in progress. For this book is not like an ordinary treatise, or a memoir, or a tale, complete in itself. It does but present the opening scenes of a history going on even as we write, and still to go on till time shall be no more. We have seen the planting of what we cannot doubt will grow into a noble and fruitful tree—the first trickling and bubbling waters of a stream that shall widen till it fertilises all the thirsty land—the founding of what assuredly will rise into a fair and mighty temple of living souls. But the *conclusion* will not be until the great Voice out of heaven shall say, IT IS DONE!

The years roll round—and we our work pursue
With care and labour. . . . .
. . . . . Yet through all the years
One great and changeless working shows itself,
Gleaming athwart the clouds of sin and woe,
With the bright glow of immortality;
But intertwined and woven in so close
With human things, that oft our feeble sight
Fails to discern it; yet 'tis ever there,
Out of the complex and corrupted mass
Shaping a new creation; day by day
Clasping fresh objects in its firm embrace,
Its wond'rous circle ever widening,
Until He come, Whose hand hath wrought the whole,
To crown it with completion! O for eyes,
Divinely touched, its glories to perceive!
O for a vision, free from earthly stain,
To trace its all-triumphant way! O let
Thy work appear unto Thy servants, Lord!
And let its beauty shine into our hearts!

S. G. Stock.